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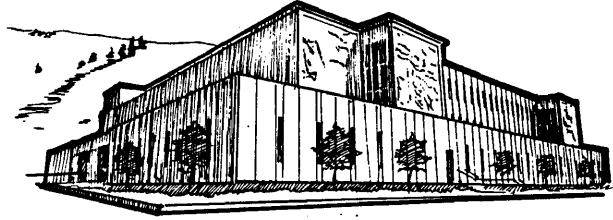
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University of
Montana

IN-DEPTH PHOTOJOURNALISM PROJECTS
AS TEACHING TOOLS IN JOURNALISM SCHOOLS:
AN ANALYSIS OF THE PHILIPSBURG, MONTANA PROJECT

By

Patricia J. Reksten

B.J. University of Missouri, 1978

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements

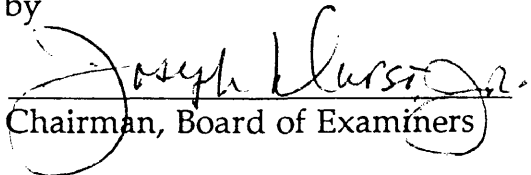
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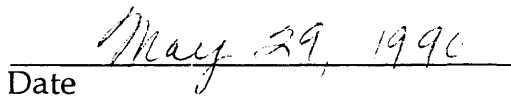
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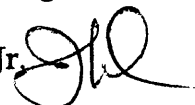
ABSTRACT

Reksten, Patricia, J., M.A., June 1990

Journalism

In-depth Photojournalism Projects as Teaching Tools in Journalism Schools:
An Analysis of the Philipsburg, Montana Project (148 pp.)

Director: Joseph P. Durso, Jr.



This thesis examines the role that in-depth photojournalism projects play as teaching tools in journalism programs. Specifically it is an analysis of the in-depth photojournalism project conducted at the University of Montana's School of Journalism. In May 1987 photojournalism students went to the small town of Philipsburg, Montana, to document the people of a town that had about the same population in 1987 as it had in 1887. After the students had finished taking pictures and interviewing the townspeople, the photographs were edited for a traveling exhibit. The copy and photographs were then edited for a book on the small Montana mining town. In-depth copy that reinforced and extended the information in the photographs was written. Extensive captions were written for the photographs. The book was then designed and laid out on a computer.

Research was conducted through personal interviews with those involved in similar in-depth projects. Numerous student-produced photography books were studied in the course of this thesis. Other sources of information included documentary photography, design and typography books and sociological studies of small towns. Professors of sociology, history and photojournalism were consulted as well.

This thesis concludes that there is much evidence that in-depth photojournalism projects are beneficial to the students, the professors, the schools and the communities and states in which they are conducted. It also concludes that before undertaking in-depth photojournalism projects, one should take steps to ensure there is solid administrative and financial support to complete it.

PREFACE

This thesis has been written to help those who are thinking about incorporating in-depth photojournalism projects into their teaching curriculum. It is an analysis of the procedures used in documenting and implementing an in-depth project conducted at the University of Montana School of Journalism.

During six days in May 1987, 15 students and professors and lecturers from the School of Journalism focused their attention (their cameras and their note pads) on the people of Philipsburg, Montana. The aim of this thesis is to enumerate steps taken to complete such an in-depth project so teachers contemplating such an endeavor will be able to learn from those who have already finished extensive photojournalism projects.

Included in this thesis is advice from noted photojournalism professors. The author hopes that this thesis and the attached appendix will be helpful to others.

The author is especially grateful to Angus McDougall, professor emeritus at the University of Missouri School of Journalism, for his support and advice, and to my husband, James Dopp and children, Joel and Devin, for their encouragement. This thesis is dedicated to Warren Brier, a University of Montana journalism professor, who always encouraged his students.

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INTRODUCTION

Trying to teach photojournalism so students are really prepared to be professionals when they leave school is a challenge. There is so much to learn. Students not only must feel comfortable in the college setting, they must learn to communicate in the “real world.”

They must be able to meet a variety of people, make those people feel at ease in front of a camera and then get story-telling photographs of them. They must be able to tell other people's stories without biasing the reading and viewing audience. It was with this belief in mind that I attempted an in-depth photojournalism project as a teaching method.

In May 1987, 15 photojournalists from the University of Montana's School of Journalism spent a week focusing their attention on the small town of Philipsburg. Philipsburg is one of the oldest towns in Montana and a good deal of the town is already a part of the National Register of Historic Places.¹ The purpose of the project was to document, through photographs and words, the people of Philipsburg: their lifestyles; relationships to each other and to the community in which they live; their lives in the 20th century as shaped by more than a century of boom-and-bust economics, and their roles

¹James R. McDonald, Philipsburg Historic Resource Survey, (James R. McDonald Architects P.C., 1984), p. 3.

in a rural community.

Philipsburg is an ideal setting in many ways. The town is similar to other small towns in Montana. Its fortunes have swung wildly since 1864, driven by the ups and downs of mining, logging and agriculture. Despite its economic roller-coaster ride, Philipsburg has remained curiously stable. It still has about the same population as in the 1890s.²

Because much of the town was already on the National Register of Historic Places, it seemed appropriate to launch our maiden documentary photography project in a town that was one of Montana's maiden settlements.

Another major factor in the project's success was that it was about 80 miles from Missoula. The students documenting the town stayed there for six nights. Because students couldn't readily travel back and forth they were immersed in the town, its people and its culture.

The goals of the Philipsburg project were multiple. Photographing the people of a small town would require students to interact and establish rapport with them. Students would learn about the townspeople's lifestyles and their value systems. Students would be taking individual pictures, photo stories and writing about the people they photographed. So they were required to use a variety of communication and journalism skills.

²U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1980 Census of the Population, (Vol. 1, Characteristics of the Population, Montana), pt. 28.

Another goal was to show rural Montana as it is today. As I said in the preface to the book about the town that I produced for publication :

History is alive in Montana. The state is young and pioneers, who have trouble remembering what happened yesterday or last week, have rich memories of their early life--of the oldest trapper in the area, the gold mining days, the buffalo roaming their ranges, the days before dog ordinances.

Historic displays are rich with yellowed photographs of these people--and their images and stories are there for the viewing. But times are changing and these glimpses of life are not being recorded as of old.

That belief was the impetus behind this project. Years from now, people should be able to look at their ancestors and predecessors and see what these people were like. They should be able to view a lifestyle that was and perhaps gain an understanding of the people who came before them.³

Yet another goal was to provide a photographic archive for future generations. Almost each frame of the 10,000 or so frames of film exposed during the Philipsburg visit has been identified. Many students completed comprehensive caption information, so not only will the negatives be preserved, but so too, the names and the stories of those photographed.

The Philipsburg project was accomplished in several phases. After the town was selected and after the preliminary inquiries had been made about the feasibility of bringing students to document it, a documentary photography class was organized for students. The students spent most of the quarter preparing for the documentary. Then starting on May 14, 1987, the students recorded the people of the town. When they returned they

³Focus on Philipsburg: A Montana Mining Town, Scott Crandell, ed. Patty Reksten, (unpublished book, 1990), preface, p. 5.

completed photo stories with text as part of their final projects for the quarter. They also worked on the comprehensive caption information.

The next phase was to edit the nearly 10,000 frames with two goals in mind. The first was a traveling photographic exhibit. The final goal was to publish a book of the students' work. Scott Crandell, then a graduate student at the University of Montana, wrote much of the text. I added text, wrote captions, edited, laid out and designed the book on a Macintosh computer using page layout software.

CHAPTER ONE

HOW THE PHILIPSBURG PROJECT WAS SET UP

Using in-depth photojournalism projects as a means of teaching is not a new concept. In 1973 Angus McDougall and Bill Kuykendall, photography professors at the University of Missouri School of Journalism, took their students to the small Missouri river town of Lupus to document the town and its people. Three years later the first Missouri river town book was published by the University of Missouri.⁴ Four more small town books were photographed and edited by undergraduate and graduate students at the University of Missouri within the next 10 years.

Other universities, specifically Western Kentucky, Minnesota and the University of North Carolina, have been using in-depth photojournalism projects as teaching tools in the curriculum. (How professors from other schools handled these projects will be discussed in Chapter Four.) But it was really the Missouri books that inspired the Philipsburg in-depth project.

Carrying out a project of such magnitude requires a good deal of planning, research, and organization. The first job is to determine subject matter for an in-depth project. Since photojournalists mainly photograph

⁴LUPUS, Portrait of a Missouri Rivertown, ed. Edward R. Vidinghoff, (University of Missouri School of Journalism, 1976), p. 2.

people, the person heading the project is the key ingredient in determining who the students document. I chose a small town in Montana because I believe that understanding the lives of those in small towns can help us better understand ourselves and others. Maxwell Hamilton, author of Main Street America and the Third World, says in his book that we learn about all people by studying one.

Rich Beckman, associate professor of the School of Communication at the University of North Carolina, on the other hand, takes his visual communications students to small Caribbean islands so his students "are faced with having to approach a different kind of people than they have ever before approached."⁵ He wants his students to go to a totally new place and a totally new culture, "one that has a different set of ethical and moral values."⁶

After the documentary site is chosen, the professors or project directors have to contact any local officials. It's important that the people understand the in-depth photojournalism project. In the case of Philipsburg, Bob Cushman, then a visiting lecturer at Montana's School of Journalism, and I made numerous trips to the town to meet with townspeople. We met with the Rotary Club. We attended an annual chamber of commerce banquet at

⁵Rich Beckman, interview by author, phone interview, Missoula, Montana, 23 April 1990.

⁶ibid.

which we presented our proposal to document the people of the town. I passed around some of the Missouri river town books as an example of the kind of in-depth project we were planning. We met with the school officials, county officials, hospital officials, the mayor, the local press.

Trying to anticipate every problem that might arise during the actual documentation is the key to a successful visit. Ask numerous questions. Where will the students stay? How much will it cost to stay (in Philipsburg) for a week? Are there darkroom facilities in the town? What supplies are needed? Is there a logical place for nightly critique sessions?

Since Philipsburg is more than 80 miles from Missoula, students had to stay in the town while documenting it. There are several advantages to this. The students become short-term residents. They are immersed in the activities of the town and can continue to photograph the people at night. We arranged for the men to stay on the floor at St. Philip's Catholic Church and for the women to stay at the Presbyterian church. The two were only about a block apart so it would be easy to communicate and to schedule critique sessions. Not only would it cost the students much more to stay in motels, they would be more spread out staying in several rooms. When all participating in the project are sleeping together in sleeping bags on the floor there is a certain sense of camaraderie that develops. It also means that students as well as professors are readily available to help each other with any problems that might arise.

It is difficult to anticipate the costs of such a project before doing it, but there are certain constants that would apply to any in-depth photojournalism endeavor. Final costs depend on the anticipated final product. If a book is anticipated, have an accurate idea of the costs. This means that every aspect of producing a book has to be researched in advance. How many halftones? Who is going to edit it? How is it going to be produced? On what kind of paper is it to be printed? Color? How many copies? Are there going to be any bleeds in the layout? They generally cost more because a larger paper size has to be selected to accommodate the bleeds. The best way to answer many of these questions is to find books that will meet the needs of the project. Take them to a printer and get estimated costs. Printers are generally very helpful. They'll explain, for example, that textured paper, might not be appropriate for a photographic book, because of possible uneven printing of halftones.

Is there going to be a slide show? With music and script? Find out what it would cost for renting studio time to produce the tape. Do students have the expertise to produce the sound bites to accompany the photographs? For at least one of the Missouri river town books, students wrote and sang some of the background music for the slide show. Think about the possibility of including oral histories of the people photographed. It is not usually difficult in a university setting to involve someone who is an expert on oral histories.

Is there going to be a photo exhibit of the best work? Will the prints be

mounted or matted? How will the exhibit be circulated? What will be the anticipated shipping costs? What does it cost for insurance? Many museum curators book their exhibits up to a year in advance, so find out the procedures for applying to show the work long before it is ever photographed. Help in answering these questions can often be obtained by calling local and state art or history associations. We are indebted to University of Montana arts curator, Dennis Kern, who provided much of the necessary information to put together a photography exhibit of the Philipsburg documentary project.

It is a monumental task to develop film as the students are exposing it, but it also is a useful teaching tool. As students shoot the stories, the film can be edited. The photo stories will be more complete. So, too, will the sociological documentation of the town. Setting up a makeshift darkroom involves much advanced planning. First, find out if there is one in the area. I found an abandoned darkroom in the art complex at the high school in Philipsburg, but it was unequipped. We brought all the tanks, reels, thermometers, chemicals, negative sleeves, light tables, grease pencils, film drying units. Make a list of all the needed equipment and check it twice. Finding an extensive photographic resource in a small town or location is unlikely. If developing black and white film, consider processing it archivally. All the film and the prints from the Philipsburg project were archivally processed. In order to critique the students' work without printing contact sheets or enlargements, I found that the negatives, while in the plastic

protection sleeves, could be enlarged by using an overhead projector. This meant that although the film had to be processed in Philipsburg, we didn't have to cart heavy enlarging equipment and trays to the town.

Start looking for funding sources months before the anticipated shooting of the in-depth project. The student cost is going to be high. By applying for grants, you might be able to defray some of the costs. The School of Journalism received film and some chemicals from Ilford. A local darkroom supplier also contributed supplies and gave the school a discount rate on other supplies. Because the students were going to be writing stories about their subjects, they were also eligible for Reader's Digest Funds to help defray some of their traveling and eating expenses. Possible funding sources include local art and historical councils, state historical societies and state and national humanities councils.

I also applied for a visiting scholar grant to bring Angus McDougall, professor emeritus of the School of Journalism at the University of Missouri, to the University of Montana. McDougall and his students produced a series of five books while he was head of the photojournalism department. McDougall presented a university-wide seminar on the development and implementation of projects that document our disappearing rural culture through photography and reporting on April 2, 1987.

Other preparations for the in-depth project included deciding what was going to be taught to the students before they descended on Philipsburg,

Montana. If planning to use guest speakers, it is best to line them up far in advance. I consulted with sociology and history professors, photojournalism professors from other states and an oral historian. I also made a trip to the Montana Historical Society to see if there might be a possibility of storing the negatives and prints there at a later date and to find out what background sources might be available for the class.

CHAPTER TWO

WHAT WAS TAUGHT TO STUDENTS

Some unique opportunities exist to teach students about history, sociology, anthropology and political science in an in-depth documentary photojournalism class. The Philipsburg course at Montana was carefully designed to expose the students to a multidisciplined understanding of the town's history, culture and economics.

The students also were taught about the history of documentary photography projects in the United States. Many lectures were devoted to the recognized documentary photographers. Students saw slides by Jacob Riis and Lewis Hine, two of the earliest social documentary photographers in the United States. Riis's 1890 photographs and stories of tenement slums in New York City were published in a book, How The Other Half Lives.

Although Riis was a reporter for the New York Sun, he used his camera as a means of documenting what he perceived as social ills. His photographs of children working in shops and factories were instrumental in the passage of child labor laws. Lewis Hine, on the other hand, was a sociologist and a school teacher in New York who taught himself how to take photographs in the early 1900's. He, too, applied his camera as a means of showing the plight of child laborers. He started working as an investigator for

the National Child Labor Committee in 1907⁷ and was “often exposed to physical harm, even death, for the immorality of child labor was meant to be hidden from the public.”⁸ In the 1920s and 30s, Hine started photographing the American working class. Our students had an opportunity to see his slides as well as to look at his book, Men at Work, during the documentary class. Lewis Hine said in the forward of his book: “This is a book of Men at Work; men of courage, skill, daring and imagination....”⁹ Our students would be documenting men and women and children at work and play.

I felt it is important for our students to understand that not all documentary photographers are unbiased reporters. Riis was a reformer. Hine worked for the National Child Labor Committee and was a main force behind the enactment of stringent child labor laws. Many of the documentary photographers after Riis and Hine were as interested in social causes as they were documenting what was in front of them. It is important, too, for students to realize that the technical tasks of a photographer in the 1890s and early 1900s were much different than those of today. Riis and Hine used 8X10 cameras and glass plates to make their photographs. When Riis worked at

⁷Lewis Hine, America & Lewis Hine, Photographs 1904-1940, with a foreword by Walter Rosenblum, (New York: Aperture, Inc., 1977), 17.

⁸Ibid., 13.

⁹Lewis W. Hine, MEN AT WORK, (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1977), preface.

night he used magnesium flash powder. It is an interesting diversion to think of Riis roaming the New York slums at night with a tripod-mounted dry plate camera and magnesium flash powder. Every time he took a picture he would leave puffs of smoke in his wake. The film speeds were extremely slow, so many early photographers would have to expose images for minutes to get an exposure. Today students pack lightweight 35mm cameras and film with speeds fast enough to document almost any situation, with little effort and in many cases without adding additional lights. Many cameras today have automatic exposure and focus features.

When the Farm Security Administration photographers began to document the effects of the great Depression on the agricultural community, the cameras were smaller and the film faster. Our students read books about the only government-sponsored documentary project ever undertaken. They also saw many slides of the work and listened to several lectures on the extensive, nationwide documentary project. One book in particular that was a good teaching source was Forrest J. Hurley's, Portrait of a Decade: Roy Stryker and the Development of Documentary Photography in the Thirties. Students saw slides by Arthur Rothstein, Dorothea Lange, Ben Shahn, Carl Mydans, Walker Evans. They also saw Margaret Bourke-White's photographs of the Depression, the war, the German prison camps. They looked at Gordon Parks documentation of black America and W. Eugene Smith's war photography, as well as his sensitive photo essays of a "Country

Doctor," "Nurse Midwife," and others.

Smith's most extensive documentary project resulted in a book about the effects of mercury poisoning in Minamata, Japan. In the early 1970s, Smith photographed in a community where toxic wastes from a nearby factory had for years been dumped into the water. The people were fishermen and they ate the fish that lived in the contaminated waters. Then children began to be born deformed. Many died. Minamata's disease was recognized as methyl mercury poisoning from industrial wastes. Smith said of his documentation:

"Photography is a small voice, at best, but sometimes--just sometimes--one photograph or a group of them can lure our senses into awareness. Much depends upon the viewer; in some, photographs can summon enough emotion to be a catalyst to thought. Someone--or perhaps many--among us may be influenced to heed reason, to find a way to right that which is wrong, and may be inspired to the dedication needed to search for the cure to an illness. the rest of us may perhaps feel a greater sense of understanding and compassion for those whose lives are alien to our own. Photography is a small voice. It is an important voice in my life, but not the only one. I believe in it. If it is well-conceived, it sometimes works. That is why I...photograph in Minamata."¹⁰

When the students had a basic background on the history of documentary photography in the United States, it seemed appropriate to direct their attention to other student-produced documentary projects. And McDougall's visit did just that. McDougall, professor emeritus at the University of Missouri, flew to Montana early in the spring quarter of 1987.

¹⁰W. Eugene Smith and Aileen M. Smith, MINAMATA, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1975), back cover.

McDougall is an award-winning photojournalist, editor and well-known author who retired from the Missouri faculty in 1982.

McDougall, who was in his early 70's when he arrived in late March of 1987, spent all day and into the evening giving lectures, showing slides and talking to students and university faculty about documentary projects. He spent almost an entire day in Philipsburg roaming the hills of the town, getting a feel for the in-depth documentary project.

Aside from producing five books of student work, McDougall's students also produced in-depth slide shows of the individual communities. He brought the books and the slide shows with him to Montana.

His visit was inspiring to students and journalism faculty members. He met numerous times with the students, talking to them about how to document the people of a rural community, how to show the numerous aspects of the people's lives, about the importance of integrating good storytelling photographs with good writing. McDougall, the author of Visual Impact in Print, a picture editing book that is widely used in the profession and in teaching photojournalism, also met with regional newspaper professionals while he was in Montana. He gave a university-wide lecture on "The Missouri River Town Books: Documenting Rural America." His lecture was attended by professors from the history department, the political science department, sociology, the law school and several others. The students from the documentary class who attended were able to see how an in-

depth photojournalism project is integrally tied to the history, the sociology and the economics of the area.

I met extensively with McDougall discussing ways to make the Philipsburg visit a good experience for the townspeople and the students. We talked about the importance of establishing a permanent record of the people. The primary outlet for that record would be an archival exhibit and a published book.

McDougall asked to go to Philipsburg to examine the town. So on Saturday, April 4, McDougall, Bob Cushman and I spent the most of the day at the historic mining town. We met several of the people that the students would later be documenting. McDougall was an inspirational force. He loved walking up to people we encountered in the town and asking about their lives. Philipsburg is built into the side of the hills and after perhaps two hours of walking up and down the streets of the town, McDougall looked up a long hill that led to some houses we had not examined and said to his colleagues who were at least 30 years his junior, "Do you think you're up to finding out who and what is up that hill?" It was up that hill that we met the long-time miner, Henry Hull. Henry Hull's story is one of the last ones in Chapter Seven, "Growing Old," in the Philipsburg book.¹¹

Although I had been to Philipsburg several times before we took the students to the town, I did not want the students to go there until they were

¹¹Focus on Philipsburg: A Montana Mining Town, 83-85.

ready to document the people of the town. There were several reasons for this. Part of the importance of the project was to have the students establishing rapport with the people they were to document. If they had been to the town before the actual dates for the in-depth photography project, they might have started the shooting and interviews with some preconceived ideas of the town. I wanted their approaches to be fresh and the experience a new one. This project could give the students a chance to practice their people-oriented photography skills while also learning valuable lessons on establishing trust with strangers in a strange environment. And although some of the students who photographed in Philipsburg were from small towns, none was from that small town.

In order to prepare them adequately for the in-depth project, the students needed to understand much about small-town life. I tried to accomplish this by having guest speakers talk about the history of the area, the sociology of the town, the economic factors that shape Philipsburg.

Jim McDonald, a Missoula-based historical architect, talked to the class about the history of the town and the architecture. His Philipsburg Historic Resource Survey book and his explanations about how the architecture is tied to the history provided additional information about the town the students were to photograph.

Paul Miller, a sociology professor at the University of Montana, also talked to the class. He used as background material information from a book

by Albert Blumenthal, who published a sociology book on Philipsburg, Small-Town Stuff, in 1932. It is important for the students to have a good background in the sociology of a small town because it helps in understanding the people.

Bill Farr, a history professor at the University of Montana, also lectured to the students. He talked about how the history of an area influences the present day life. Indeed this proved to be the case in Philipsburg. As Scott Crandell, now an editor/designer at the Great Falls Tribune, wrote in the text of the Philipsburg book:

“...Townpeople love to talk about the storied past; they're much more reluctant to discuss today or tomorrow. There's a strong tendency to steer the interviewer toward the oldtimers 'who can tell you some great stories.'

It is as if living in the past is more reassuring than dealing with the more unsettled present, or perhaps that modern times will seem mundane and colorless compared with history, and subsequently that the town presented in print will not be appealing and positive enough. And yet the town is far from uninteresting or uninviting in the 1980's...”¹²

As students were given information about the history of Philipsburg, they soon learned that the town had had a fluctuating economy since its inception. It was also important that they had an understanding of the present economy of the town. We were lucky to find that there had been a tape made in 1986 in which the people talked about their economic circumstances. Students listened to Philipsburg: Montana Small Town, a

¹²ibid, 10-11.

radio tape made for a public-radio series called Reflections in Montana.¹³ In 1986 the local mine had once again been shut down and Philipsburg miners had to find jobs elsewhere. By the time we arrived in the town to photograph the people in mid-May 1987, the mine had reopened and a processing mill also reopened while we were there. So the students really obtained first-hand knowledge of the community's erratic economy.

The Philipsburg Visit

When we arrived in Philipsburg, the students were assigned three major areas of responsibility. They were to complete two in-depth photo stories in six days, record overall visual impressions of the people and the town and they were divided into sociological documentary categories.

The students were trying to photograph more than 1,000 people in six days, an impossible task. To try to cover all the major aspects of the community, students were paired to photograph: youth, social life, faith, men and women at work, government and the elderly. By using sociological categories I hoped to avoid too much duplication in coverage. It might, for example, be easier to cover social life than any other area, but if the students concentrated on that solely, they would not be getting a true depiction of the lives of the people in Philipsburg.

When we arrived, Mike Kahoe, a Philipsburg native and

¹³Jyl Hoyt, Philipsburg: Montana Small Town, audio tape for Reflections in Montana public-radio series, 1986, entire tape.

administrative assistant for Granite County, gave the students a tour of the town. (Kahoe is also hospital administrator in Philipsburg.) The students filed past church row, as it is referred to by some residents, and ended up in front of the historic jail that still has a noose hanging in the tower window. Many of the town's structures are more than 100 years old.

For the next six days, photographers were everywhere. Students managed to get into the dark tunnels of the Black Pine Mine nearby (see appendix, page 62). One recorded an early morning fire (appendix, page 51). Another managed to photograph a late-night high school drinking party (appendix, page 42). The in-depth stories were the hardest. Students had to gain the confidence of those they were photographing. Then they had to get them to continue their lives as if the students weren't there. Film was developed daily by Bob Cushman and me. We spent much of our time in front of a light table with individual students, talking about what they had on film, helping them determine what they still needed. Every night we met for an extensive critique of the day's work. Negatives were put on an overhead projector so all could see them. Students helped critique the work, offering suggestions for possible shots, ways to gain confidence, citing holes in the photo stories. We took pictures in rain, sleet, snow and sun during our stay.

Students were taking photographs literally all hours of the day and night. They followed fishermen to nearby streams and creeks on the opening day of fishing season (appendix, page 28, 76). They were there to record the

reopening of the Contact Mill and Mining Co., a mill managed by Philipsburg resident Bill Antonioli, that processes silver and gold (appendix, pages 78-79). An advantage of processing the film as it was shot was that I could readily see if the entire spectrum of the population was being covered. As the week progressed some students were asked to help others with particular documentation.

As the students received their negatives they were asked to write caption information for each frame. If they didn't have all the necessary information, it was easy to get because they were literally at the doorsteps of the Philipsburg people. This attention to caption detail is critical to establishing an accurate archive for future generations.

Putting all of the students together for shooting and critiquing the in-depth project definitely fosters a spirit of friendly competitiveness. There was also a real sense of sharing the experiences of the photographers and of the townspeople. Students and residents alike went out of their way to help each other. I was stopped many times by residents who told me they were enjoying the experience. Some townspeople alerted us about different functions and events and people we should be photographing.

The Philipsburg residents were perhaps the best teachers of the in-depth photojournalism project. They let the students into their homes and their lives.

When the students returned to the big city of Missoula, they had two

weeks to print two in-depth photo stories and 10 individual photographs.

The photo stories were to be complete with written story. All photographs had to include comprehensive cutline information.

CHAPTER THREE

FINISHING THE IN-DEPTH PROJECT

The students have finished their work when they turn in what you require of them. Your work is far from over.

It is at this point that you decide what's going to happen to the thousands of images that you and your students have created. Schools from throughout the United States handle the means of achieving the end products in a variety of ways. Most involve undergraduate and graduate students long after photographing the documentary is over. The varied approaches of some of the other schools will be discussed in Chapter Four.

For the Philipsburg documentary project I had three goals in mind: a comprehensive archive of negatives and captions for future generations, a traveling exhibit and a published book of student work. Two of the three goals have been attained. The book is ready to publish, but we have not secured the necessary \$9,000 to print it.

A major aspect of such an in-depth photojournalism project is editing all the film. In the case of Philipsburg, more than 10,000 photographs were taken. The editing process is an ongoing one. As the photographs were processed in Philipsburg, they were edited by Bob Cushman and me. As the students were printing their final projects, there was extensive editing of the

photo stories in particular. Then after the students were gone, there was more extensive editing to decide what photographs would be included in the exhibit.

The photo editing for the book took longer than all of the other projects. It was my goal from the start to make this book a comprehensive look at the people of the town of Philipsburg. I felt it important not only to tell their story photographically, but also with words. The text should go beyond the individual photo stories that were completed in many of the Missouri river town books and also be more comprehensive than the ones produced by undergraduate students at Western Kentucky University in which the majority of the book is photographs (albeit excellent ones) without the benefit of the words that complete the story.

Our journalism school is historically suited to the task of producing the all-important words that help tell the story of the people of Philipsburg. The history of the school has been to produce good writers and editors. It has only been in the past few years that there has been an emphasis on photojournalism. The text the documentary photography students wrote to complete their stories didn't tell the real story of the town. The individual stories did not add up to the whole. To convey a real portrait of the town, the reader has to understand how historical, economic and sociological forces have shaped and molded the people who are present-day residents. It was with this in mind that I encouraged Scott Crandell, a graduate teaching

assistant to pursue the in-depth story that gave added meaning to the photographs. Scott and I spent hours sifting through negatives, trying to decide what photographs were needed to tell the story photographically. Then we talked about what text was needed to enhance, clarify and expand upon the pictures. We decided early in the process that the chapters would be divided for the most part into the sociological divisions that we had used for the documentary photography project. The first chapter, however, would have to clarify the past for the readers. The introductory chapter would set the scene for the comprehensive story the rest of the book would tell. It was important also to look at the Philipsburg project as an in-depth story that could and did apply to other small towns in Montana. As I wrote in the preface to the Philipsburg book:

“...The Philipsburg book is patterned after the Missouri books...There is one difference, however. We have tried to include not only documentary photographs of the town, but also an extensive text to provide a better understanding of the people and their problems and triumphs.”¹⁴

Scott wrote in the introduction:

“...Silver, manganese, timber and gold have in succession been the resources to which the little town on the hills tied its fortunes. The resources ebbed and flowed, jobs came and went, dreams soared and were shattered, but Philipsburg always remained, sometimes battered but still viable....

Philipsburg's boom and bust history is mirrored by many other Montana small towns, resource towns in a resource state....

In the late 1980's, Philipsburg is a town with one foot rooted in its mining past and the other stretching forward to secure a

¹⁴Focus on Philipsburg: A Montana Mining Town, preface.

future. It's not much of a mining town any more, but it thinks it still is. The town faces many of the challenges today that are widespread in Montana communities. It can do little to control the external forces that dictate many aspects of life, particularly economically....

Through the social pressures and challenges, however, Philipsburg and its denizens persevere.”¹⁵

Crandell wrote the text to go with the photographs that I selected for the book. By doing this, I hoped to avoid a common problem that often occurs when photographs and words are not put together to tell a more complete story. Crandell knew which in-depth individual stories I had in mind for specific chapters. We discussed how the text and photos could be melded together as one. Once he completed his comprehensive text, I took another approach. I found negatives and photographs that would help illustrate the story. For example, in the introduction, Crandell talked about how the town “extols itself as the prototypical friendly community,” but that a stranger certainly felt like one when he walked into a cafe and felt the stares of the regular patrons. I found a photograph that illustrated this perfectly, and so made sure that it ran on the same page as the text (see appendix, page 10). There were also many photo stories and photographs that I wanted to include in the book that Scott had not included in his text. In these cases, I simply wrote the text for these sections, or added it to the text that had already been written. I did this in the hope that the story, in both words and pictures, would be as complete as possible.

¹⁵Ibid, 8.

Editing and designing the book took more time than all of the other aspects of the in-depth project. I decided to edit and design it on a Macintosh computer because I would have total control over the final product and it would save money on printing costs in the long run. If I hadn't set the type and designed the book myself, it would have cost a good deal of additional money to pay someone else to do it. In Montana printers charge up to \$50 an hour for typesetting. A graphic designer would charge as much for the design once the type was set. In addition, a graphic designer might not be a journalist who cared about the placement of photos with text. Some of the other schools in the United States that do book projects have graduate students design and edit them for their master's projects. Since I have worked as a design consultant and as a photojournalist, and since the entire project was my idea, it seemed appropriate for me to complete it.

There were several hurdles. Although I had worked as a designer, I had never tried to paginate (design with a computer) with a Macintosh system. In fact, much of the early time I spent on the book project was in learning a complicated software publication design system, PageMaker.

I wanted to choose a typeface that was appropriate for the subject matter. Since there was to be so much text in the book, legibility considerations had to be addressed. I considered several factors, x-height of a typeface (This is the height of a lower case "x" in a family of type.), type size,

type width, line width, leading (line spacing), form, contrast and reproduction quality of the typefaces available on the Macintosh computer. Because the book was to emphasize the long-standing heritage of the people of Philipsburg, I chose a traditional typeface, Palantino. Palantino is also a serif (with cross strokes) typeface that has been found to be generally more legible and faster to read than sans serif type. Rolf E. Rehe, a recognized expert in typography and the author of several typography books, concludes in one of his books, Typography: how to make it most legible, that based on several studies serif type is easier to perceive than sans serif letters and that serif type can be read between 7 to 10 more words per minute in comparison to sans serif type.¹⁶ I chose several different forms of the Palantino family: small capital letters for headlines, regular 10-point typeface for the text type and Palantino italic type for the captions, pullout quotes and the photography credits. To add typographic contrast, I selected Narrow Helvetica Bold, a sans serif typeface, for the subheads in the book (Appendix, 1-88).

As I chose pictures for the book, and as I started the process of combining the words and pictures, I found that the caption information supplied by the students wasn't always adequate. The librarian at Philipsburg proved invaluable in filling in information gaps. I tried to include information in the cutlines that was not in the text so the readers would learn

¹⁶Rolf F. Rehe, Typography: how to make it most legible, 5th ed., (Carmel, IN: Design Research International, 1984), 32.

even more about the townspeople. I believe that inattention to caption information is a downfall of many photo and text endeavors in newspapers, magazines and books.

I tried to make sure that the placement of the photographs on the individual pages of the book not only reinforced the copy (and the copy reinforced the photographs), but that the photos chosen worked together as well. I varied the sizes of the photographs on the page to add visual interest. I also concentrated on varying the perspective of the photographs that ran together. For example, I tried to include overall shots, with medium distance shots and close up detail shots to add visual variety (appendix, 1-92). The photographs that had complicated backgrounds or contained too many people couldn't run small or they couldn't be easily read. There were other technical considerations. Some of the photographs in a spread were technically weak. Perhaps they were slightly underexposed or were rather radically enlarged. They, too, were run smaller so the technical aspects of the photograph wouldn't overpower the content.

My number one goal was to accurately reflect the people of Philipsburg. I tried to ensure that we were covering all major aspects of the people of the town. I asked myself if we had concentrated too much on one segment of society. Were there some in-depth photo stories on individuals in each chapter so the reader wouldn't be getting just a cursory glance? Was I being fair in my selection of stories? For example, near the end of the book there

are profiles on two very different long-time residents (appendix, 80-85). I felt it was important to include both so I wasn't just presenting one type of resident as signifying many.

This book is not in the vein of the old National Geographics. I tried to present a balanced picture of Philipsburg, not just the sunny side of life. You can see pregnant teenagers (appendix, 41) as well as teenagers helping others (appendix, 43). There is a photograph of a young boy smoking (appendix, 39) as well as ones of boys bound for the fishin' creek (appendix 28). I tried to create a visual flow to the book, concentrating on picture pairings (appendix, 41, 43, 51, 84-85) and photo stories (appendix, 20-21, 30-31, 34-35, 60-62, 74-77). Even though Philipsburg considers itself a mining town¹⁷, showing the other industries and businesses was necessary. The traditional values of the town are reflected in the text and in many of the photographs (appendix, 72). Many of the photographs in this book could be found in any small town in America.

After the book is edited and paginated, it is a good idea to check all the reproduction sizes of the photographs. If a school has a photo scanner, this can be accomplished by scanning the photographs into the computer. If this isn't the case, then the photographs should be sized and reproduced on a copy machine. This ensures that all the photographs will fit the way they were intended and gives the printers a final, comprehensive dummy to follow. It

¹⁷Focus on Philipsburg: A Montana Mining Town, 16.

also eliminates any last minute problems with having to resize photographs that don't fit the layout. Some recommend adding one percent or even two percent to the final reproduction size to eliminate any sizing problems. I just check and double check my sizing because I may not want to lose any of the edges of a photograph.

All of the photographs printed for the 75-piece exhibit were also archivally processed. Part of the exhibit now is on display at the School of Journalism. Formal opening of "Focus on Philipsburg: A Montana Centennial Portrait," was Nov. 14, 1988, at the School of Fine Arts Paxson Gallery in the Performing Arts/Radio-Television Center at the University of Montana. The exhibit was in the gallery through Dec. 17, 1988. It then was displayed in the University Center Ballroom when legislators from throughout the state came to the university for a meeting. The exhibit opened in Philipsburg during the summer of 1989 as the town celebrated the state's 100 birthday.

Many people who come to the School of Journalism comment on the photographs. I believe it is a good way to show others what student photographers at the University of Montana can accomplish when they attempt an in-depth photojournalism project.

CHAPTER FOUR

HOW OTHER SCHOOLS HANDLED SIMILAR PROJECTS

In-depth photojournalism projects at other universities throughout the nation vary in scope and content. But all professors contacted about their projects said they are an important part of the teaching curriculum.

McDougall, professor emeritus from the University of Missouri School of Journalism, and the acknowledged initiator of student-produced books, said the first book started as a photographic challenge on the part of the students.

“...our students wanted to see how good (Bill) Kuykendall and I were when it came to shooting... [of] course what happened was we had all these pictures that looked very good. We made a slide show to try and give them some permanence. That's where we got the idea for the book.”¹⁸

Since McDougall's students produced five river town books over a period of ten years, McDougall says that by the last book, the documentation was pretty complete. “You know what are the essential things that need to be covered to get a good sense of the community,” he says. When the students photographed the last of the towns in the series, Arrow Rock, Missouri, the project was different than the first four.

¹⁸Angus McDougall, interview by author, phone interview, Missoula, Montana, 22 March 1990.

"Previous rivertown books basically were by-products of photojournalism class field trips. Each photographer had to find his own story subject without having to consider its place in a documentation of the town. Later, editors would organize the photo coverage into cohesive presentations.

Gathering material for this book was done more efficiently. It was a master's project for Marcia Joy Prouse. As an editor, she had to study the community and then decide what ought to be photographed to tell the Arrow Rock story interestingly and accurately.¹⁹

McDougall believes that photographing a town by just having students find individual stories can mean that some important aspects of a town are left uncovered. As an example, he cites the "Glasgow experience."

"In the case of Glasgow, I had two sociologists come in and talk about the historic and sociological background of the community. Slave owners came up the Missouri River and had plantations. Well students found this information fascinating and from the first pictures, you would think it was entirely a black community."²⁰

McDougall says the students always take slide shows back to the communities. When they took the slide show back to Glasgow, people told them they hadn't shown the other side of the community, "the upper crust so to speak."²¹ McDougall took three different photojournalism classes (a total of 44 students) to the river town of Glasgow partly to finish documenting the other side of the community and partly because Glasgow was the largest town in the documentary series (population of about 1,400).

¹⁹Arrow Rock: 20th-Century Frontier Town, ed. Marcia Joy Prouse, (University of Missouri School of Journalism, 1981), p. 199.

²⁰McDougall, phone interview.

²¹Ibid.

Michael Morse, professor at Western Kentucky University, said the books that are now produced yearly as the result of the Western Kentucky University's Mountain Workshop, started "innocently maybe 15 years ago on an informal basis....It was in the early days of the photo program and the faculty and the students started doing weekend projects."²²

Morse said soon the school got permission from the State Department of Education to do a "couple day" documentary in all the remaining one-room schoolhouses in Western Kentucky. He says the schools have vanished now but he hopes to someday preserve them by publishing a book. Then students photographed the Main Street in Bowling Green, Kentucky. They photographed derelicts and people who lived in the upstairs of stores. The documentation was made into a slide show with music. Morse credits Jack Corn, a former photographer and editor from The Nashville Tennessean who taught at the university before moving to a Chicago newspaper as an editor, for the documentary fervor at his university.

"...we soon began to realize that these (the in-depth documentary projects) were a pretty good deal, a good teaching situation that was important to the development of students as photojournalists. This really works as a chance to get away and really put the pressure on the students and make them think about what they're doing and why they're doing it."²³

First his students documented a coal mining camp in Tennessee.

²²Michael Morse, interview by author, phone interview, Missoula, Montana, 20 April 1990.

²³ibid.

Morse said he invited some "outside faculty," usually working photojournalists or editors to come to the documentary workshops and help teach. The next year the students documented Burksville, Kentucky and then Tompkinsville, Kentucky.

"I kept looking at the results of this and said to myself, gee this is so good and I hate to see all this stuff (negatives, prints) just sitting here. I remembered the one-room school house and thought about how it had never been shown in one piece...What we really ought to do is make a book of these photographs for the record, a portfolio of work from Western Kentucky. That summer I put together the first two books. I started more than three years after the students had taken some of the pictures."²⁴

Now the workshop is well known nationwide and students from all over the country apply to attend. There is never a shortage of professionals to staff it, either, says Morse. He no longer edits and produces the books. "I realized it was a teaching tool so I integrated it into a class called photo editing. Everybody is assigned a layout and we have a team of editors who build consistency into the books."²⁵ Since Western Kentucky University does not have a graduate program, Morse puts "really trustworthy undergraduate students" in charge of producing the book. He says he intervenes only if there are major problems with the book.

Morse plans to continue the in-depth documentary photo projects.

"I think it's been a great tool for training students. I've seen many students' lives changed by the experience. Bruce Baumann

²⁴ibid.

²⁵ibid.

(picture editor of The Pittsburgh Press) tells you point blank you ought to be an aluminum siding salesman instead of a photographer. It's really good because students get input from people they don't know. Other students who are doing the right thing gain confidence. It's also a good public relations device. It puts the name of the university and our school before the people. It's also a way of promoting individual students and helps them get good internships. People get this book and say it's pretty good stuff. I've also seen some really good students, so excited, so intent that they can't perform well in the documentary workshop situation. The books don't reflect the quality of the students overall, but it's pretty good. This is the result of what they can do in three days."²⁶

James Brown, now the dean of the School of Journalism at the Indianapolis campus of Indiana University, took students to small Minnesota towns when he taught at the University of Minnesota. Brown was an assistant professor when he started the projects. "We generally lived there for about a week. We had a class of 15-20 students. By the time we returned to campus we'd pretty well had the town covered."²⁷ The students would return to campus, process the film and then make 35mm slides that they would put to music. Brown says the students then returned to the towns and invited the entire population to the showing.

"This got to be a real highlight for the town. It (the slide shows) would fill the auditoriums. The last place we went, the slide show was to be in the high school gym and the high school graduation was the day before. We had students shooting the graduation, had the film processed and had already programmed the show to allow for the

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷James Brown, interview by author, phone interview, Missoula, Montana, 18 April 1990.

graduation slides. The students drove into town with the film about an hour before the slide show."²⁸

Brown says he knew McDougall and knew of the Missouri student projects in which they would take people to small towns and produce books, but he never tried a book because he didn't have the resources to "pull it off." For awhile he was the only photo professor at Minnesota. He doesn't know, however, what happened to the slide shows that were produced while he was there. "They're certainly not operable any more. I think they are probably disintegrated."²⁹

Brown is a big advocate of in-depth photojournalism projects. He cites another in-depth project that he was involved in at Minnesota, in which an honors class of photographers, reporters and designers who researched, wrote, photographed and produced a single-topic magazine by quarter's end.

"If you get good teachers from all those areas working as a team that's a good representation of the real world. I think it's very important for students to have this (in-depth photojournalism) experience. It is probably a capstone experience. Good photojournalists must learn to work with good reporters and understand the value of the written word. Good word reporters have to understand the value of working with good photojournalists. Then the whole story is more meaningful and communicates effectively."³⁰

Brown says he believes that too often schools compartmentalize the

²⁸ibid.

²⁹ibid.

³⁰ibid.

journalism school curriculum. Reporters and photographers never get a chance to work together. He says student publications are big offenders of this because the publications “become cliquish and no student editors force people to work properly as total journalists.”³¹ He also recalls that in the case of the honors magazine class, the final idea for the single-subject magazine came from photo students.

One of the benefits of in-depth photojournalism projects from Brown's point of view is that photo students are proposing story ideas. He hates to see newspapers where photojournalists are waiting for assignments from editors or reporters. Students who do produce in-depth projects demonstrate their competence, Brown believes, and if the project ends up in a tangible form, they have excellent portfolio pieces.

Rich Beckman, associate professor of the School of Communications at the University of North Carolina, is involved in a five-year documentary project.

“What we are doing is taking students on location to small islands in the Caribbean. These are islands under 50 square miles and have a population of under 50,000 people. Each student produces a written and photographic picture story that will fit together into part of a cultural documentary of the island.”³²

The course takes three and a half weeks and is listed in the university's study abroad program.

³¹ibid.

³²Beckman, phone interview.

Beckman's goal in creating this in-depth photojournalism experience is to take the students totally out of their normal environment.

"I try to drill into students that they are going to learn from these people about their culture, their lifestyle. In a short period of time they have to gain the trust of the subject. The major benefit to the students is their own personal growth in terms of learning about the world around them and how different it is....It is equally rewarding for the people to teach this course as it is for students to take it. You learn a tremendous amount, you gain an appreciation for other cultures, other ways of life. It's an amazing benefit to you and it is first hand, on-the-spot research."³³

Beckman believes students tend to be conditioned to the world around them. The places he takes them they have never been.

"I think there has been a lot of positive public relations for the school for doing a project of this magnitude. The people on the islands are 90-95 percent black. I bet the university is 85-90 percent white. That multiculture awareness has brought positive publicity to the school....There are a lot of potential pitfalls, not the least of which is danger. Take 15 students to small a Caribbean island, one that is not always the most peaceful place and there is an obvious potential for problems. Our people travel in teams after dark. We try to cover a complete aspect of the culture; health care, religion, government, youth, sports, family life, the whole gamut."³⁴

As an example of the learning experience, Beckman talks about one island with about 1,500 people.

"These people have no newspaper, the radio station was damaged by Hurricane Hugo, so people communicate via a bulletin board. Here is an area ripe for learning about communication, a totally

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid.

different way of doing things than what the students are used to.”³⁵

The North Carolina students are photographing the islands with color slide film. While they are on the islands they give their photo subjects black and white prints.

Beckman says that the first day on an island is for student orientation. He has set up in advance, speakers from all different sectors of the island's culture, from government officials to the common man. Consequently, the students are establishing contacts from the moment they step ashore.

Beckman will have already been to the island and met with government officials before the class trip. Three to four days before the trip, the students are given extensive information about the island and the project and must come up with specific and general story ideas based on “their interests and our needs.” He brings in anthropologists, historians and sociologists to talk to the students involved in the intensive course.

Beckman believes any good photojournalism program will include in-depth documentary projects. He says teachers should be willing to invest the time and energy required.

“Take your students out into the world and make a contribution. It's a good, solid learning experience for the students and the faculty. It's very rewarding.”³⁶

Beckman says it's critical to have administrative support before starting

³⁵ibid.

³⁶ibid.

a project like his. Students pay for almost all their own expenses at North Carolina. Beckman says that Eastman Kodak does supply a little film and that American Airlines gives the university a couple of free tickets, so the flight cost for students is reduced slightly because he averages the costs of the remaining tickets. To help with the editing of the photographs, National Geographic sends the university a picture editor. He is also able to use desktop computers supplied by local vendors.

The University of Missouri, on the other hand, got seed money for its first book from Professor McDougall. He received \$1,000 for being named Distinguished Journalism Faculty member for the 1972-73 school year and earmarked the money for the book project.

“One thing I think ought to be emphasized in terms of salability of the book, is it's got to have good strong interesting text and captions. Otherwise people just flip through it. You've got to make it something they want to look at more than once. You can get your money back from these projects. Every family in town will buy a book.”³⁷

Sale of one book helped pay for the publication of the next one. The value of the books, aside from the positive public relations it creates for the university, goes beyond the value of having students meeting strangers and establishing rapport in a real life situation, McDougall believes. “The other thing I think is important is that there are valuable lessons to be learned from the common man--the person who wouldn't normally get into the

³⁷McDougall, phone interview.

paper unless his lifestyle is explored in depth.”³⁸

McDougall says student in-depth photojournalism projects have a long-term value for the profession. “Some of the picture pages that are being produced today aren't worth the paper they're being printed on. Most of them are fluff pieces. They aren't in-depth stories.”³⁹ He believes that there needs to be an increased emphasis on students producing in-depth stories in school. He hopes that preparation will ultimately be reflected in the profession.

Students at the University of Missouri's School of Journalism haven't been producing in-depth books since McDougall retired, but the in-depth projects continue. Many of them are printed in the university-owned newspaper, The Columbia Missourian. In-depth projects are sometimes printed in the Missourian's Sunday magazine, “Vibrations.” Not all journalism schools, however, have the luxury of owning a daily newspaper.

Western Kentucky University's books don't now contain much text because of the concentration on the photography workshop. Morse points out the books are produced almost a year (the first books were designed up to three years later) after the areas are photographed, so it is difficult to get the necessary text information at that time. He is contemplating a change that

³⁸bid.

³⁹bid.

would mean the books would be produced almost immediately.

“What we want to do now is change (the workshop) so it is also an electronic desktop publishing program. We would produce the book electronically on the screen at the workshop. About halfway into the shooting workshop, we'd start an editing workshop. We'd lay it (the book) out and have it camera ready when the workshop is over.”⁴⁰

Morse has some novel ideas for funding in-depth projects. He recommends that the Board of Regents of the university be approached for initial funding. When he started looking for money he applied for several grants and received partial funding from a folklore society. He got the university to match the funding. Morse says the books have helped the university's relations with the Kentucky community. He also sells the books, but anyone who appears in one gets a free copy.

Beckman has a few years yet to go in his five-year cultural documentation of the Caribbean islands. Yet he is already looking forward to the next project.

⁴⁰Morse, phone interview.

CHAPTER FIVE
FEEDBACK ON THE PHILIPSBURG PROJECT

Rich Beckman of the University of North Carolina believes that one of most beneficial aspects of his islands documentary is the understanding the students gain of the people they photograph. This benefit is not just limited to the students or the professors.

The people of Philipsburg also gained a better understanding of the students. When the students descended upon the small mining town, the people knew they were coming. They also had some preconceived notions about what to expect. As we visited the restaurants, the churches and the bars one of the first questions asked concerned our environmental leanings. Because the history of the town is based on mining, the topic is a hot one in Philipsburg. Many Missoulians, and those associated with the University of Montana in particular, are viewed as "flaming environmentalists."

Over breakfast at a town cafe, one elderly resident reading the morning paper scoffs over an article about wilderness.

"I sure don't want any more wilderness," he says to the stranger next to him. "What do they want it for? You can't take a vehicle in there, you can't cut any timber and you can't do any mining work."

There is strong opposition voiced to new wilderness, usually in the context of jobs. "You can't take 100,000 acres out of a resource-based county and not lose jobs," says County Commissioner Bob Ivie.

Wilderness opposition often is paired with vilification of those who support it. Often targeted in conversations are the hated Missoula environmentalists who push for wilderness. Similar excoriation is

reserved for the Congressional delegation working on wilderness legislation. At one Philipsburg service-club gathering, a heartfelt and only half-facetious motion was made to declare one Montana Congressman an "asshole." It didn't reach a vote, but it drew support from those present.

One Philipsburg man theorizes it would be difficult to find 50 people in the entire county who favor more wilderness. The depth of antagonism expressed when the conversation turns to wilderness indicates that estimate may not be inaccurate.

One interchange at a county commissioners' meeting is a case in point. A resident says to the commissioners, "We ought to go snowmobiling up there [proposed wilderness] before they lock it up." A commissioner responds, "We've decided we're going to go up there anyway."⁴¹

Some of the students did have strong opinions about the environment, but they were in the town to learn about and record the lifestyles of the people. So they listened, they interviewed and they photographed. When they went into the tunnels of the Black Pine Mine far beneath the surface (appendix 63), when they heard about the impact the reopening of the mine and the mill had on the economy and the spirit of the people of the town, their understanding of a complex issue was increased. The townspeople, on the other hand, saw that the students were in Philipsburg to learn, not to judge or foist their opinions on them.

Both groups came together in an attempt to understand each other.

Students were required to go beyond surface reporting. They went into the homes of the Philipsburg residents. They recorded their everyday living. This kind of reporting requires a high degree of trust, one that is difficult to

⁴¹Focus on Philipsburg: A Montana Mining Town, 29.

attain in a short amount of time. This is one of the biggest challenges to the students.

I was quoted in a (Butte) Montana Standard article as saying I wanted the students "to eat, sleep, breathe Philipsburg."⁴² The main reason for this immersion into the community is to gain that measure of trust and understanding. The students said in the same article they found that Philipsburg "is filled with people who care about one another."⁴³

"Most of the people were willing to be interviewed and opened up to the photographers after they saw the students were willing to sit back and listen," said Karen Nichols, now a photographer at The Daily Inter Lake in Kalispell. "I went over and just started talking to people. It was easier than I thought."⁴⁴

Todd Goodrich was a senior at the journalism school when he went to Philipsburg. He now is a photographer at the Havre Daily News. He said in an article on the Philipsburg project in the University of Montana's magazine, Montanan, that the people were what made the in-depth project so rewarding. "The biggest thing I got out of it was dealing with people that closely. You live with them; you're in their homes. It helped me get closer to

⁴²Rich Simpson, "SMALL TOWN: Students take aim at life in Philipsburg," Montana (Butte) Standard, 5 July 1987, 15.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid.

my subjects than I've ever been before.”⁴⁵

Claire Hendrickson had some of her photographs and an article on Philipsburg published in Montana Magazine in 1988. She also found the in-depth documentary project allowed her the time and the freedom to learn about the people and their lifestyles. One of the keys to an in-depth project is to ensure that it is long enough to nurture the in-depth approach. It's important to stay in the community during at least one of the work days. If students are documenting the area only on a weekend, they are missing an important part of the story of the town.

The town's reaction to the bevy of photographers who roamed the town for days on end, cameras glued to their faces, notebooks at hand, also seems to be a positive one.

Jim Waldbillig, a young Philipsburg rancher [Appendix 64-65], said, “We enjoyed it. I thought it was a tremendous thing that they're recognizing Philipsburg not as a ghost town but rather as a viable community.”

Veronica “Ronnie” Bolstad, whose family was chronicled by photographer Claire Hendrickson [Appendix 34-35], said, “I never felt like a star or anything; I just felt like she (Claire) was company.”⁴⁶

Beverly McDougal, Philipsburg's librarian, says when the photographs were displayed at the library in July and August of 1989, the response was overwhelming. “Some of the people whose photographs were up, brought in

⁴⁵Scott Crandell, “Focus on Philipsburg: Student shooters frame small town 10,000 times,” The Montanan, May-June 1988, 17.

⁴⁶The Montanan, 18.

a steady stream [of people] to show off their photos," she recalls. "One man kept bringing in various patrons of the bar to view his photo."⁴⁷

She did say that some Philipsburg residents wondered why there had to be pictures displayed of teenagers drinking and smoking. "I told them that the documentary meant photographing all aspects of the people."⁴⁸

Much reaction from townspeople came from the awareness that documentary photography took so much work. The average person is used to pointing a camera and clicking the shutter. They were amazed that students wanted them to "go about their business" and ignore the camera. They were more amazed when, six days later, the students were still trying to tell the residents' story. The president of the Flint Creek Valley Bank in Philipsburg (Appendix 18), Zane Murfitt, said the students were everywhere. "Geez, those kids were all over the place. One guy in the bank was down on the floor on his knees taking pictures, and then he'd be up standing over the desk. It was quite an experience."⁴⁹

Another benefit of the project has been the publicity. Although publicity has been sporadic over the past few years, the exhibits and the articles about the project have been beneficial to the students and to the

⁴⁷Beverly McDougal, interview by author, personal interview, 7 August 1989, Philipsburg, Montana.

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹The Montanan, 17.

university. It was President James Koch who requested the exhibit be displayed when a legislative subcommittee met in the University Center ballroom in 1989. The small exhibit of Philipsburg photographs in the halls of the Journalism School is viewed by many visitors. In April 1990 a National Geographic reporter/photographer who was visiting the school praised the exhibit and the project.

The School of Journalism at the University of Montana does not have a photojournalism sequence. Thus, our photo students are at a disadvantage when it comes to applying for jobs because, normally, they don't have the in-depth photo stories that students from other schools might have in a portfolio. Most schools with photojournalism sequences have two full years of photography courses. Our school has one year. The students who photographed Philipsburg not only had in-depth photo stories, but also many single images to add to their portfolios.

If students gain a better understanding of the world around them and people from the world around them gain a better understanding of the students, then the in-depth project is certainly a success.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS

There is much evidence that in-depth photojournalism projects are valuable teaching tools in journalism schools. Students gain valuable skills they do not gain in other photojournalism classes. Many photography classes emphasize getting single-image news, feature and sports pictures. In-depth projects, on the other hand, expand the students' horizons. If the project is a documentary one, students are not setting up the pictures as they might in nondocumentary situations. They have to observe and record situations as they encounter them. Many in-depth projects, such as the Philipsburg one, emphasize photo stories: a combination of text and photographs that explore a single subject extensively. The students must establish trust and rapport with strangers. They are cast out of their comfortable and familiar university environment and must deal with "the common man" in the real world.

There are other advantages to the in-depth project approach. Accredited journalism schools require the students to take the majority of their college classes in the liberal arts and sciences. The in-depth photojournalism projects described in this paper reinforce the importance of this requirement. The more the students study sociology, history, economics

and political science, the better prepared they are to execute an in-depth documentary project. Although journalism is not one of the humanities, undertaking these kinds of projects helps students become more understanding and, I hope, better journalists. Certainly the students, faculty and the people involved in the projects discussed in this paper believe they have a better understanding of each other.

Regardless of where students go to accomplish in-depth photo documentaries, adequate preparation before they actually take the photographs and conduct the interviews is essential. University towns and cities are ideal for this kind of preparation. There are historical societies, professors, books, audio and video tape libraries, oral historians--all knowledgeable references readily available for incorporating into a documentary teaching situation. There are people from across the country willing to travel to universities to further the education of the students. Angus McDougall is just one example of a dedicated professional willing to further student education. Other seasoned professionals who work on magazines and newspapers are also willing to help. Michael Morse of Western Kentucky University says he has more than enough professionals willing to teach without compensation at his annual workshop. They teach because they want the students to learn, to progress. And it is in their best interests to do so. Today's students will be the next generation of professionals. Rich Beckman of the University of North Carolina has

National Geographic picture editors helping with his five-year in-depth project.

Another reason these projects are important is because they help dispel the long-held belief that photographers don't suggest stories, they just carry out assignments by reporters. James Brown, dean of the Indianapolis campus of the School of Journalism at Indiana University, says in the single-subject magazines produced by students at Minnesota, it was the photography students who came up with final suggestions for the single-subjects. I believe it is important to require students to come up with their own photo story ideas as well as assign them particular subjects to cover. This ensures that they develop the critical thinking skills necessary to suggest viable stories.

Students need to realize the value of research and the role that suggesting story and photo ideas can play in enriching their lives. If students are used to suggesting photo story ideas and then are forced to refine them while they are in college, this training will serve them well in the professional world. People who suggest their own ideas will fare much better than those who wait around for photo assignments and requests to come to them. They will also be doing stories they enjoy instead of just those they are required to do. Photojournalism is a very competitive field. The students who will get the jobs are the ones willing to take chances, willing to explore subjects in-depth.

There is value, too, in having published work to show potential

employers. Although newspaper clips are important, work produced in book or magazine form, often looks more impressive than work produced in a newspaper. Photo reproduction is better in books because a better quality of paper is used. There is often more room in a book to include the in-depth photo stories that may be competing with other material in newspapers for publication. The students who edit and design the books have a ready-made portfolio piece to show prospective employers. Because these projects often take up to two to three years of the graduate student's time, the employers know they are going to be getting an already dedicated professional in the work force. These books are great projects for graduate students in photojournalism at many journalism schools.

I don't, however, recommend that graduate students at the University of Montana undertake such a project. The University of Montana's graduate program is designed for traditional students who write a thesis. Although there may be a professional project option available to journalism graduate students in the 1990-91 school year, students who choose that option will be required to complete 9 more credits than students who choose to write a thesis. There are several journalism schools throughout the country that do not have this requirement.

In-depth photojournalism projects can also be valuable to the school. The photo books produced by photojournalism students at the University of Missouri certainly did much to enhance the already deserved reputation of

the photojournalism school as being one of the best in the nation. Other professors and teachers and graduate students used the books as guides for some of their in-depth book projects. I certainly did. In-depth documentary projects foster good relationships with the community and the state. There are many outlets for the in-depth project: exhibits, slide shows, books. They also serve to attract prospective students to photojournalism programs if they are widely circulated.

The biggest stumbling block to such a project is money. Before undertaking an in-depth project, make sure there is solid administrative and financial support to complete it. The Philipsburg book that contains the in-depth story of the people of the town still hasn't been published. So even though there is a permanent record of the "common man" in a small Montana town in the late 1980s, relatively few people have seen the record.

Though the book is ready to be printed, the School of Journalism is still short the estimated \$9,000 it would take to publish it. We have made attempts to obtain funding.

Many schools have been able to secure money for their in-depth projects by obtaining funding from their state committee for the humanities. Although the School of Journalism did apply for a grant, the project was turned down by the Montana Committee For The Humanities. We did receive a \$1,000 from the university in 1987 to help buy photographic paper for the photographic exhibit.

Although the University of Missouri didn't have financial support when it started its first river town book in 1976, printing wasn't as expensive then as it is now. Also, Missouri's School of Journalism is well known and larger than some photojournalism programs. It has a better chance of receiving grants than do smaller schools that don't have the same reputation. Funding sources are available almost anywhere. Faculty members and graduate students at small schools, however, don't normally have the time or the qualifications to solicit funds. Montana is a poor state and Philipsburg is a poor community. Still, I believe there are funds available for completing the project. It's just a matter of tapping the right sources. Based on personal experience, my advice for those who are planning such a project is to get assurances of funding sources before beginning. Once the initial funding is there, McDougall says the book sales will generate money for more in-depth projects. At Western Kentucky University, the Board of Regents backed the initial book projects.

There are unique opportunities today in journalism schools to make the education process a fun and rewarding experience. The students who completed the Philipsburg project saw the long-term benefits of documenting the people of today for the people of tomorrow.

The Philipsburg book contains not only the photographs of the people of the town, but also the story of these people, how they have persevered in spite of economic and social problems. It is a story worth telling.

APPENDIX

FOCUS ON PHILIPSBURG:

A MONTANA MINING TOWN

FOCUS ON PHILIPSBURG:



A MONTANA MINING TOWN

MONTANA

● Philipsburg

FOCUS ON PHILIPSBURG: A Montana Mining Town

Photographs and text
by University of Montana
School of Journalism
Students and Faculty

Editing and Design
by Patty Reksten

Text by
Scott Crandell

*This book is dedicated to Warren Brier, a journalism professor,
who always encouraged his students.
Thanks to my husband, Jim Dopp and my children, Joel and
Devin, whose support motivated me through this project.
And finally, thanks to Angus McDougall
...for his inspiration.
--Patty Reksten*

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University of Montana
Missoula, Montana**

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**Edited and designed by Patty Reksten
Text by Scott Crandell
Photos printed by Bob Cushman**

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***Cover Photograph:
Amy Krieg during a May shower, by Jeff Gerrish***

PREFACE

History is alive in Montana. The state is young and pioneers, who have trouble remembering what happened yesterday or last week, have rich memories of their early life--of the oldest trapper in the area, the gold mining days, the buffalo roaming their homesteads, the days before dog ordinances. Historic displays are rich with yellowed photographs of these people--and their pages and stories are there for the viewing. At times are changing and these glimpses of life are not being recorded as of old.

That belief was the impetus behind this project. Years from now, people should be able to look at their ancestors and predecessors and see what these people were like. They should be able to view a lifestyle that was and perhaps gain an understanding of the people who came before them.

Documenting small town America is by its very nature an original concept, but that doesn't lessen its importance.

In 1973 Angus McDougall and Bill Wykendall, photo professors, took their students to the small Missouri river town of Philipsburg to document the town and the people. Our more small-town books were produced by photojournalism students at the University of Missouri in the next ten years. I believe these books are not only valuable to the towns and to the relatives, but also to us. They help us visualize a lifestyle that may not be our own.

The Philipsburg book is patterned after the Missouri books. Angus McDougall, now professor emeritus at Missouri, climbed any a hill in Philipsburg in April 1987 when I showed him our small town.

There is one small difference, however. We have tried to provide not only documentary photographs of the town, but also an extensive text to provide a better understanding of the people and their problems and triumphs. Scott Landell, an editor/designer for the Great Falls Tribune, spent many hours interviewing the people of the town when he was a graduate student at UM. In his own words the aim of the combined photos and text is: "to produce a lasting rendition in both photographs and words of life in the small town of Philipsburg."

I've edited and updated the text, chosen all the photographs for the book and written the cutlines as well as added text. I wish to thank Scott, Angus McDougall, and sociology professor Paul Miller for all their help and support in making this book possible.

Bob Cushman, a former visiting lecturer at UM,



Photo by Jeff Gerrish

printed almost all the photographs for this book and for an exhibit.

But most of all I'd like to thank the people of Philipsburg for their patience, their cooperation and their willingness to share their lives with others.

The student photographers for this book were: Jim Davidson of Decatur, Ga.; Chuck Eliassen of Eagle River, Alaska; Jeff Gerrish of Ronan, Mont.; Todd Goodrich of Troy, Mont.; Brian Keller of Waukegan, Ill.; Roger Maier, of Missoula; Sheila Melvin of Great Falls; Karen Nichols of Silver Spring, Md.; Wendy Norgaard of Missoula; Michelle Pollard of Helena; Jeff Smith of Missoula and Greg Van Tighem of Great Falls.

We hope to continue documenting rural lifestyles in Montana.

--Patty Reksten

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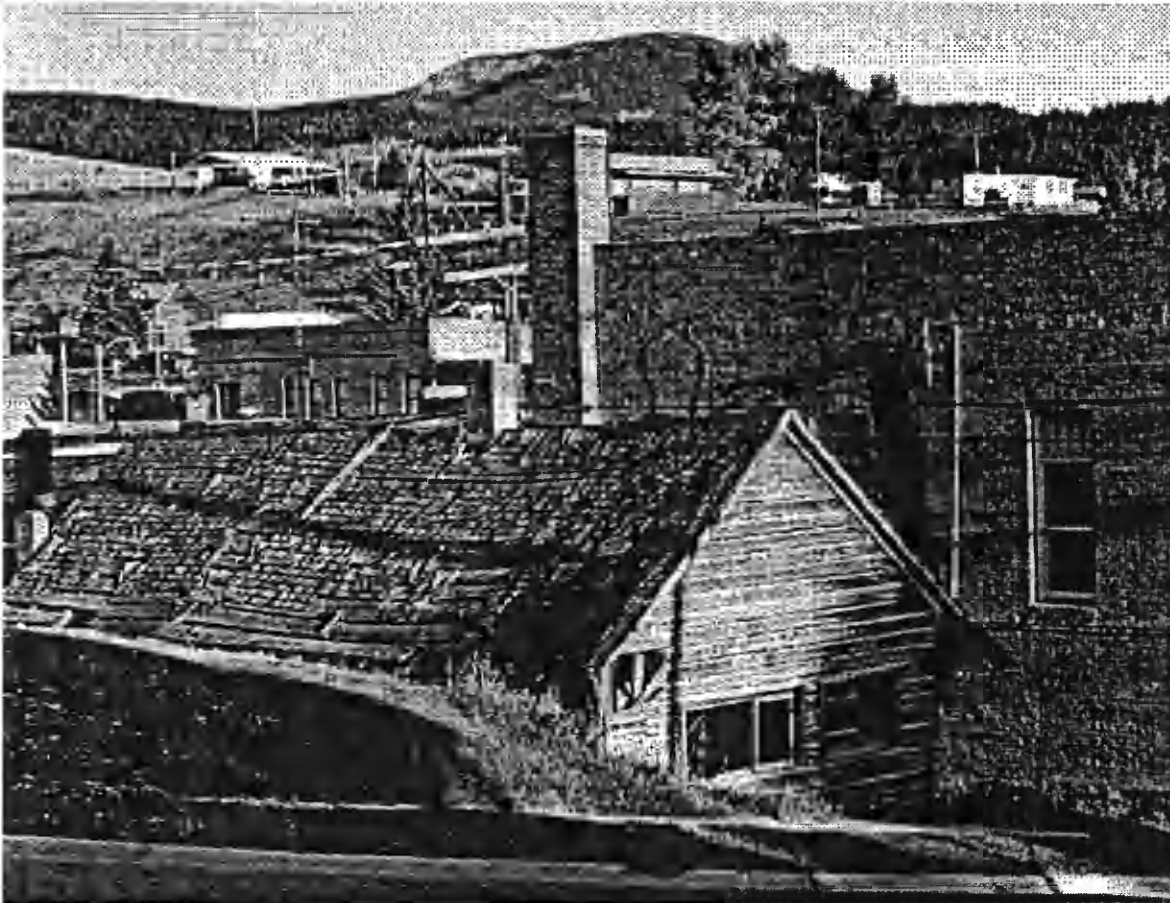


Photo by Jim Davidson



by Jeff Gerrish

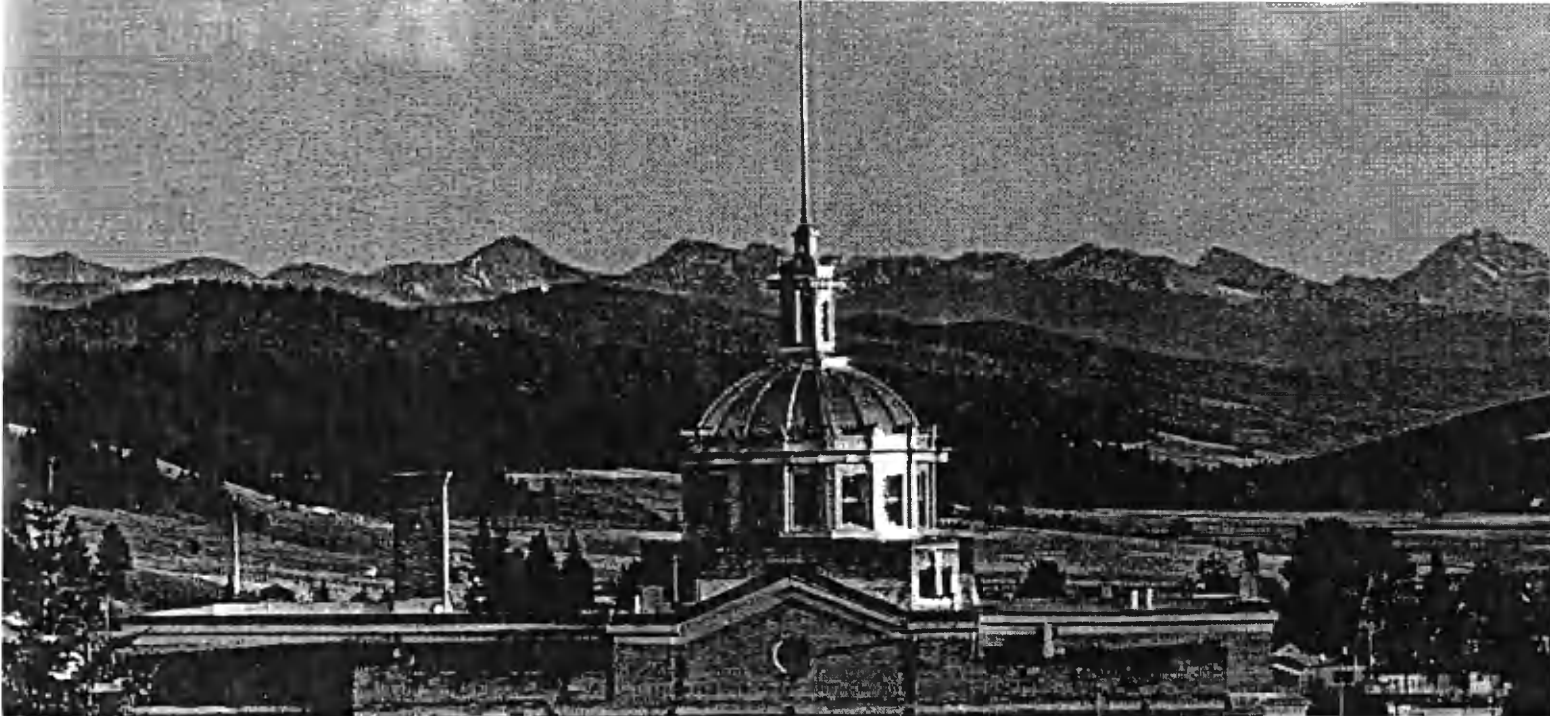


Photo by Jeff Gerrish



Weathered wood is common in Philipsburg. That's to be expected from a town that began more than a century ago. But Philipsburg is much more than weathered wood. The people have weathered the ups and downs of the economy through the years, and they persevere.

Photo by Claire Hendrickson



Philipsburg's backdrop is the mountains, whose rich minerals helped create the town.

Photo by Todd Goo

FOCUS ON PHILIPSBURG

Introduction

Philipsburg, Granite, Cable, Black Pine, Hasmark, Rumsey: a century ago all were bustling mining communities around Western Montana's Flint Creek Valley; today all but Philipsburg are only ghost towns.

They boomed, they busted, they disappeared as viable communities, leaving behind largely memories and a few physical vestiges of their glory days.

Philipsburg grew up at the same time as these towns of memory, suffered similar hard-rock heartaches, and yet avoided going the way of its sister towns. Philipsburg rode out the regular lean times, basked in the less-frequent good years, and is still alive today, a Montana survivor in many ways defying the odds that conspire against the existence of the small, remote resource community.

Silver, manganese, timber and gold have in succession been the resources to which the little town on the hills tied its fortunes. The resources ebbed and flowed, jobs came and went, dreams soared and were shattered, but Philipsburg always remained, sometimes battered but still viable. The town has stayed around the same population for a century now.

Philipsburg's boom-and-bust history is mirrored by many other Montana small towns, resource towns in a resource state. But Philipsburg's ups and downs have perhaps been more tempered than many in Montana, and the swings between good and bad times not as severe as elsewhere.

In the late 1980s, Philipsburg is a town with one foot rooted in its mining past and the other stretching forward to secure a future. It's not much of a mining town any

Through the social pressures and challenges, however, Philipsburg and its denizens persevere.

more, but it thinks it still is.

The town faces many of the challenges today that are widespread Montana communities. It can do little control the external forces that dictate many aspects of life, particularly economically. At turns, its citizens feel isolated, ignored, or used by the outside world, and as a result a bit fearful. It watches a growing exodus of its youth and an increase in elderly residents. It is surrounded by stunning scenery, yet

enjoying it comes at the price of a trying struggle to maintain living.

It wants to grow, but not so much as to effect a change in its character. Its inhabitants grapple with the social dilemma of drinking for youth and adults. It alternately resists and embraces the yoke of social control imposed by neighbors and the community. It bristles with criticism and falls back on a blanket defense: "It's no worse here than other towns."

Through the social pressures and challenges, however, Philipsburg and its denizens persevere. There are still families to raise, work to pursue, activities to join, and small-town life to be lived.

How the residents of Philipsburg live their lives is the focus of this book, a documentary look at a piece of small town Montana. This book is about hopes and dreams, reality and realizations, coping and concern. Above all, about people.

This is not meant to be a complete and detailed record of Philipsburg, but rather a portrait in pictures and words of the way of life in the community of the 1980s.

This little Montana town is not easy to classify. People



ffman's Grocery is one of two on the main street of town.

Photo by Roger Maier



Photo by Wendy Norgaard

A stranger in town is readily noticed and not easily accepted. The Granada Theatre was closed until the summer of 1989.



Photo by Roger Maier



are open enough—some are more reluctant than others—to the inquisitive journalist, but their stories differ. One resident's vision of paradise in Philipsburg is another's image of problems. The reality often lies somewhere in between.

The elements of paradise are here—a scenic, secluded mountain location, the caring of a small community, a rugged, pioneer demeanor.

And the people move slowly this morning, as they do most mornings—there's usually no reason to rush very much here. Both the pace and the peace are pervasive and particularly inviting.

But it's not quite paradise with a mountain view. Balancing the beauty are the frequently harsh difficulties faced in trying to make a living, the plethora of social problems spawned by low or intermittent incomes, the gradual graying of the population.

The town is full of paradoxes. It extols itself as the prototypical friendly community, but that warmth is hardly overwhelming in some venues. For this feeling, try walking into a cafe sometime and facing the sudden

turning of every head at the counter.

What the visitor sees are not quite the friendly visages one might expect, but the gruff, glaring attention of almost surly stares that seem to say, "Who are you and what are you doing here?"

Some people say it takes two years of residence to be accepted here. In that sense the friendliness may be largely superficial until you've proven yourself to be worthy of townspeople's approval and not disdain. Perhaps this acquiescent caution is a defense against too-swift adoption of transients who may be gone tomorrow; perhaps it's simply an inherent long-standing requirement of residence. Either rationale doesn't simplify the process of fitting in.

There also is an unusual contradiction expressed in pride over the past and present Philipsburg. Townspeople love to talk about the storied past; they're much more reluctant to discuss today or tomorrow. There's a strong tendency to steer the interviewer toward the oldtimers "who can tell you some great stories." Rare is the resident who recommends you talk to someone about the town



...e town is scenic, but --like any other small town--it has its problems.

Photo by Jeff Gerrish

day.

It is as if living in the past is more reassuring than dealing with the more unsettled present, or perhaps that modern times will seem mundane and colorless compared with history, and subsequently that the town presented in print will not be appealing and positive enough. And yet the town is far from uninteresting or uninviting in the 1980s—what may simply be lacking is enough faith by its inhabitants that it will compare well with the past glory days.

A sharp dichotomy emerges in the relationship of youth and adults. Youths, particularly teens, are wedged in a double bind by the demands of town society and the reality of adult life. The message to youths comes from a variety of sources: don't abuse alcohol or drugs. Yet all around them the targeted teens see that forbidden activity widespread among their parents and other adults.

And the town is not exactly in the front line of the progressive movement when it comes to women's roles. It has a woman mayor and the usual female complement of

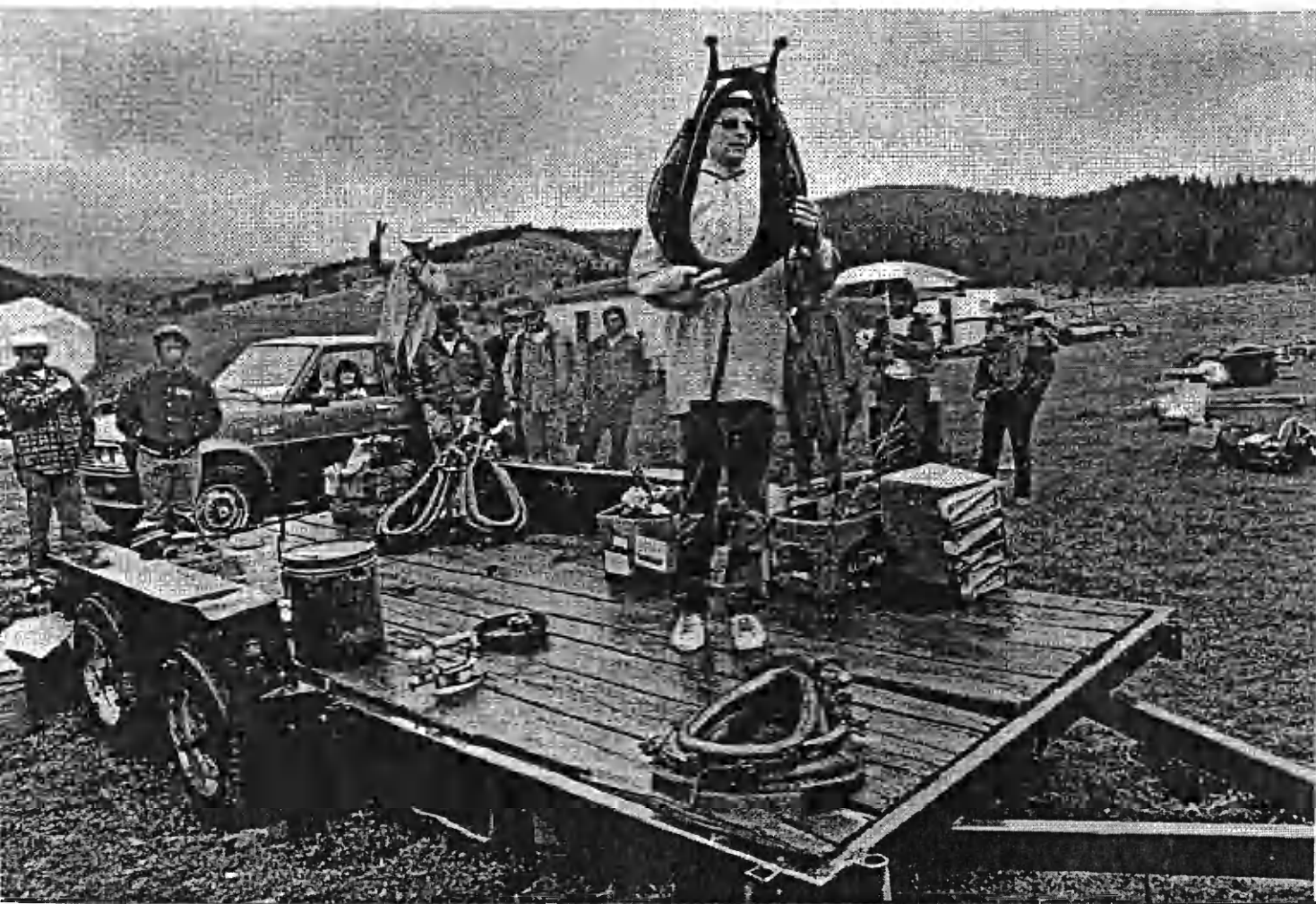
teachers, nurses, secretaries and waitresses, but neither the concept nor the presence of the professional career woman has taken root. This situation is not inherently a flaw—the traditional role for women is not a drawback per se—but it provides precious few role models for youths to observe or strive for.

Beyond characteristics such as these, however, there is much for the observer to admire in the town and its people. Perhaps most striking is the resilience of these residents—their ability to survive economically and psychologically when buffeted by nearly constant setbacks. They have learned to adapt and get along with less, perhaps, but get along nonetheless. And they bounce back time and again from adversity both personal and financial.

In this process, they have managed, for the most part, to maintain honesty and dignity.

A measure of admiration is in order, as well, for those able to cope with the myriad social pressures that are manifested both blatantly and subtly in a small community. To remain neighbors in this social vortex is no simple feat.





The rain doesn't stop a Saturday morning auction.

Photo by Jim Davidson

One critical overriding element for Philipsburgers is that, in spite of the sacrifices required and the uncertainty it often prevails, people are by and large happy and satisfied to live there. If it is the case why should anyone else's perspectives matter very much? The greatest lesson that can be learned from this small town, however, may be one of survival: a lesson in how a town that by many standards—economic, demographic and social—could be dead or dying. Yet Philipsburg resolutely refuses to do that, and quite likely will continue to stand its ground well through its second century of existence. The Philipsburg recipe for longevity is a mixture of hope, resilience, tenacity, community, versatility and faith. And it works.

Over 50 years ago, one vision of the town was foreseen by sociologist Albert Blumenthal. Concluding "Small-Town Stuff," his book on Philipsburg, Blumenthal wrote that booms and depressions were likely to be normal as long as the community depended on "fluctuating values of metals and hidden bodies of ore."

The Philipsburg recipe for longevity is a mixture of hope, resilience, tenacity, community, versatility and faith. And it works.

He further foresaw that the town "does not promise ever to be larger than it has been in the past."

Blumenthal ended his book with this prophecy:

"On the human side, it would be strange were not 1981 to find 25 or 50 of Mineville's (his cover name for Philipsburg) present residents within its midst. And there is no reason for supposing that 'small-town stuff' will not be very much the same as it is today aside from the changes occasioned by further and further participation of the

people in the activities of the larger world by such means as general use of airplanes, television, and other products of man's inventive genius."

To Blumenthal, "small-town stuff" meant the main characteristics of little communities: the close acquaintanceship of everyone with each other, the dominance of personal relations, and individuals continuously observed and controlled by the community.

Those same mainstays are present today in Philipsburg, to a strong degree just as Blumenthal described in 1932 and predicted for decades later. They are perhaps the glue that binds the community together.

VIEWS OF THE PAST

Chapter One

But for a polysyllabic obstacle, the town could have been called Deidesheimerburg.

It was back in 1867, when an unnamed mining community was beginning to build itself along Camp Creek at the eastern edge of the Flint Creek Valley. Philip Deidesheimer was supervisor and builder of the Hope mill, the first silver mill of its type in Montana. Deidesheimer built the mill near the east end of a gulch on a road that was to become the town's main street. Casting about for a name for the fledgling community, townspeople wanted to honor Deidesheimer, but "Deidesheimerburg" was too much a mouthful, so his first name became the town's and Philipsburg was titled.

By December 1867, the town had a population of 1,500 and about 250 houses—a swift start for a community that hadn't existed two years earlier.

The first recorded evidence of white man at what was to become Philipsburg was in 1858, when Granville Stuart camped nearby.

But it was in late 1864 or early 1865 that Philipsburg had its true mining genesis. Just above the town's future site, prospector Hector Horton discovered silver-bearing material sufficiently rich to stake a claim, and later in 1865 he located the Cordova lode, a larger strike. Horton apparently had little interest in developing his claims, but he spread the word of the silver strike, and Philipsburg's mining days were ignited.

The finds of the Comanche lode, Hope lode, and Speckled Trout lode fueled the boom (and samples of ore were assayed to contain 10,000 ounces of silver to the ton). Miners converged on the area, and outside investors, particularly from St. Louis, took a financial interest that was to continue for 60 years.

After construction of the Hope Mill to process ore on site, the town of Philipsburg was laid out west of the mill on June 15, 1867. The town was soon growing at the rate of one house per day, according to early newspaper reports.

Barely two years later, the mill shut down, the town dwindled, and Philipsburg now knew its first bust as well as its first boom. Neither would be the last.

The town was relatively empty—one report said its population dropped to three—until a resurgence in 1872 with new silver mills operating. After a less serious downturn in the late 1870s, Philipsburg and a growing complement of sister mining towns entered the glory days of the 1880s.

By this time, however, Philipsburg had advanced a step beyond existence as solely a mining camp. It served as a

major supply and trade center not only for the mining operations but also the agricultural enterprises growing the Flint Creek Valley, and the arrival of the Drummond Philipsburg Railroad line in 1887 boosted the town's growth and security.

Underlying the boom years of the 1880s and 1890s was the rich silver strike on Granite Mountain, a high-elevation site about four miles east of Philipsburg. Two product lodes here spawned the town of Granite, which hit a population of 3,000 at its peak, and a pair of mining

companies, Granite Mountain and BiMetallic which each built mills to process the ore.

The two companies produced \$28 million in silver bullion between 1867 and 1898, making the Philipsburg area a leading silver-producing center.

While Granite and nearby camps such as Rumsey were sprouting, Philipsburg was building well, with masonry buildings replacing frame

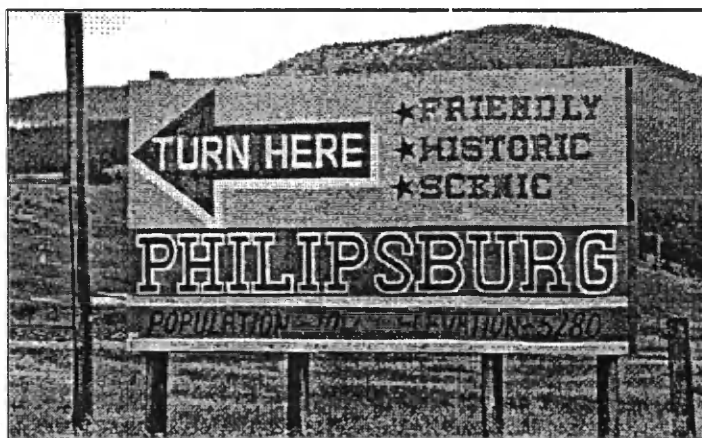


Photo by Todd Goodrich

structures and tents, residential areas sprawling out beyond the original townsite, and the town finally incorporating in 1890. Three years later it became the county seat of newly formed Granite County.

Philipsburg got a complement of four churches in six years, with all the steeples arrayed on the north hill of town. Just on the other side of the main street, a two-block long lineup of red-light houses provided a different scene for miners. The town was also an assembly of livery stables, ice houses, barns, hotels, saloons, warehouses, lumber companies and brick yards. There was even a brewery. The central business district (which encompassed the brothels) was concentrated on a three-block section of the main street, Broadway.

The silver boom that boosted Philipsburg and was its sole reason for existence for towns such as Granite, however, was not to last long. Previously buoyed by government silver purchases, the silver market collapsed as a result of the Panic of 1893 and subsequent repeal of silver-purchase legislation.

The impact on the town of Granite was immediate and devastating: both the Granite Mountain and BiMetallic operations closed and the population of the town disappeared virtually overnight. The miners departed almost without packing, deserting furnished homes. What had been a robust town was empty.

Philipsburg, too, suffered deeply, but survived the crash. The Hope mill still operated and ranching and farming provided some stability. Moreover, a new discovery, sapphires, beckoned miners.

Philipsburg held its own in the years until World War



Abandoned mining cars rest on a hill near Stumptown, a mining town that didn't survive.. These hills behind Philipsburg were once mining with ore.

Photo by Todd Goodrich



The signs to these once-thriving mining towns are fading now. But if you look closely you can see that whoever created the signs had a sense of humor. One fading sign says: "Tower, Stumptown, North East P Burg, Population-- Sometimes. " Above, an old mining tunnel provides views of the past.

Photos by Karen Nichols and Todd Goodrich



The signs remain that warn of ore trucks and kids, and the kids are still there. Sometimes, so are the trucks. Photo by Claire Hendr

relying on an increase in agriculture plus the remnants of mining: the Hope mill operated until 1910 when the ore ran out, shutting down the seminal mine after 40 years of operation.

Tourism, driven by the advent of the automobile, began to manifest itself around Philipsburg with a small influx of visitors geared for camping and fishing.

It was war, however, that would ignite the next big boom for Philipsburg. This time the mineral was manganese, not silver.

Facing dwindling foreign sources of manganese during World War I, the U.S. government protected domestic producers. Philipsburg, whose mining district happened to hold the largest manganese deposits in the country, found that this previously useless byproduct of silver mining was suddenly in demand.

The boom also meant a surge in Philipsburg growth as the town swelled to 3,000 people in 1917 and 1918.

Even after the war, manganese remained the mining byword into the 1920s, although production was destined for batteries rather than steel and iron manufacturing as before. During this decade, 90 percent of the U.S. output of manganese dioxide came from Philipsburg.

Not all was rosy and roaring during the 20s in Philipsburg, however. Farm fortunes plummeted with the downfall of homesteading, the town's two banks folded—one in 1924 and the other in 1930—and Philipsburg felt the impact of the Depression in the 1930s. One resident recalls the Depression wasn't all that bad for Philipsburg. "Mining towns are used to being depressed," she says.

The demand for manganese and silver was renewed with during World War II, and Philipsburg prospered once more. After the war, the demand for manganese waned.

But while mining was on a downward slide, periodic upturns in the ranching business and an increase in timber operations picked up some of the economic slack. At one point several sawmills operated in the area, but all those firms closed by the end of the 1970s.

Philipsburg is a mining town that depends on ranching, timber or tourism to survive.

Sapphire mining, which had enc commercially in the 1940s, rebound in the 1980s with a twist—it became a tourist venture, with visitors sifting gravel for sapphires.

Silver mining was not finished, either. The Black Pine mine west of Philipsburg has been an on-again/off-again operation from the 1970s until 1988, when the most recent closure took effect. The last of the mine's

frequent reopenings was in May 1987, but less than a year later the price of silver had dropped \$2 an ounce, the mine shut again and the mine went up for sale.

Milling of ore also has survived in Philipsburg. The original BiMetallic mill site is still the location for a mill built in 1981 by Contact Mill and Mining Co.

Miners in the late 1980s turned to gold as the primary objective, and several small Philipsburg-area operations were actively drilling for gold. Apart from actual extraction, there are a variety of exploration projects.

In sum, the history of Philipsburg from its 1860s inception (Philipsburgers like to call 1864 the town's origin—that way they can say it's older than Butte) to the 1980s has been a busy century and a quarter. Locals are keenly aware of the roller-coaster past of the town, but point out that somehow at least one element keeps the economy—and therefore the town—rolling.

When mining has been down, timber has been good they say. Or when mining and timber both plummeted, ranching was successful enough. At any one time, at least one of the legs of this economic support has been healthy enough for Philipsburg to bank on. And tourism, whether in the form of sapphire hunters, ghost-town visitors, fishermen or hunters, has crept into the picture as a welcome although intermittent boost.

The town's past is perhaps most colorfully (and appropriately) summarized in the words of early drug M.E. Doe: "Philipsburg is like a whore's drawers at a miners' picnic: up and down and up and down."

*e town has endured in spite of war and depressions. There is still much
dence today of a frontier existence.*

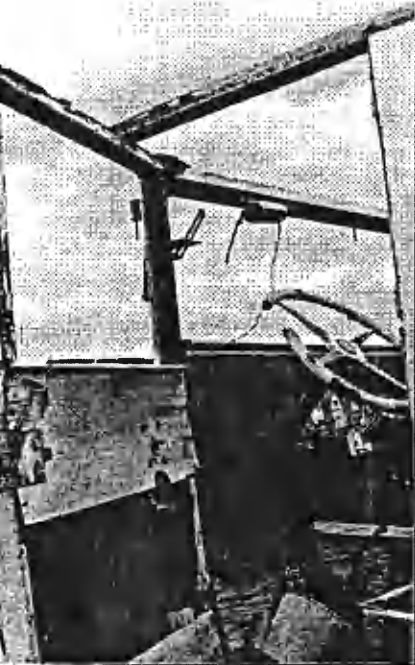


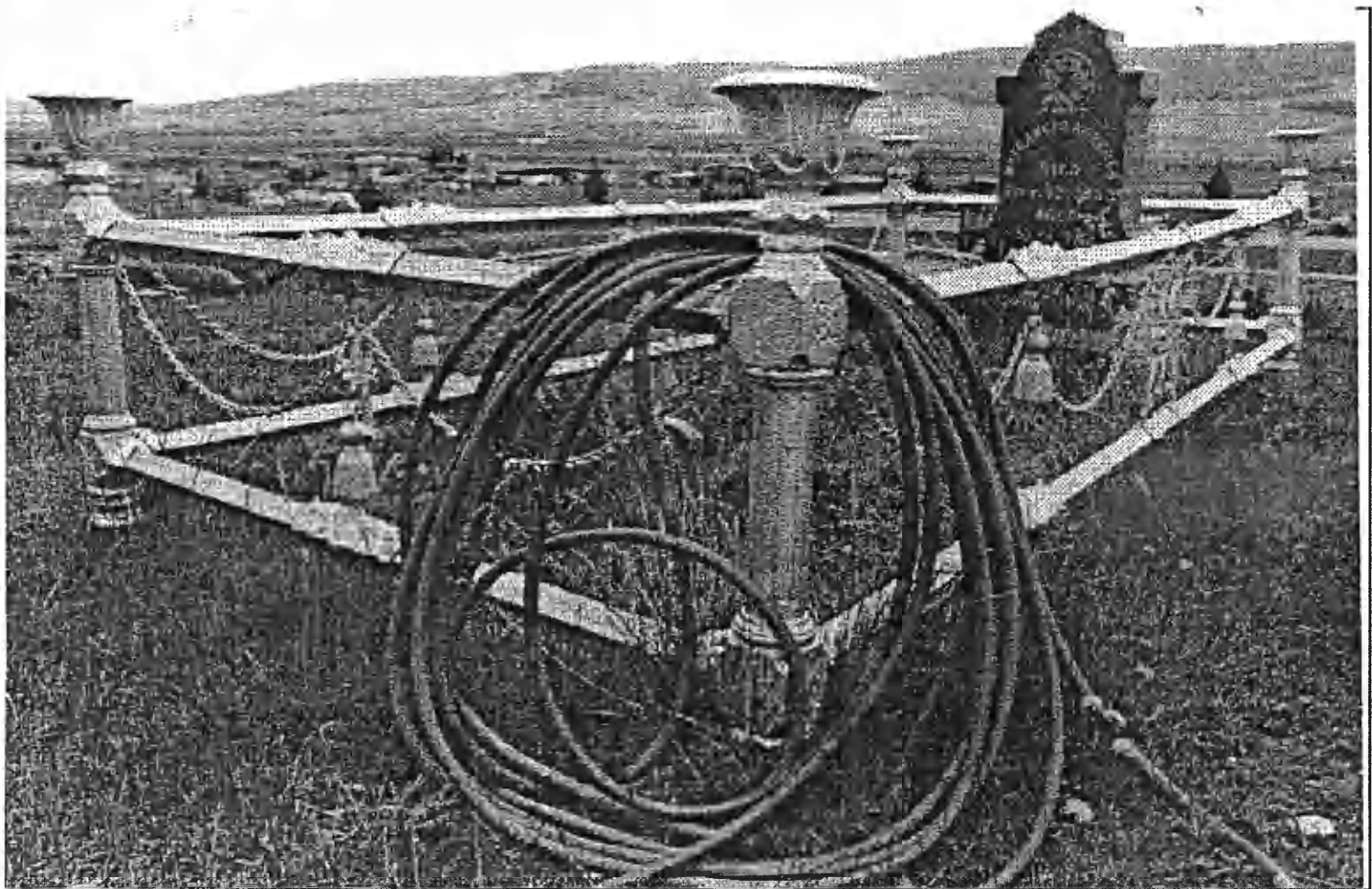
Photo by Todd Goodrich



Photo by Claire Hendrickson

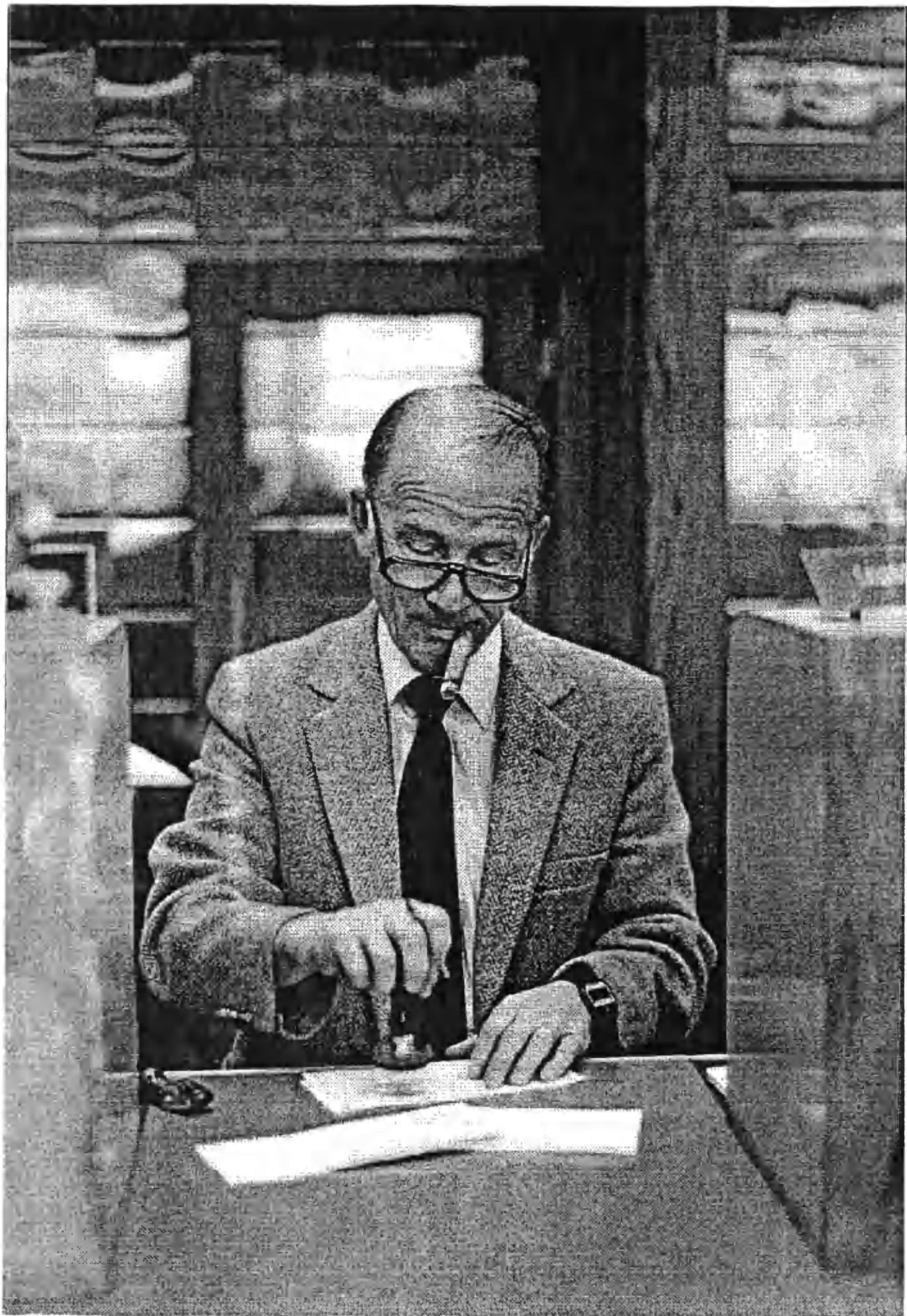


Photo by Claire Hendrickson



William Francis Roberts died at the age of 30 on Sept. 12, 1892.

Photo by Brian Keller



Puffing his trademark cigar, bank president Zane Murfitt stamps papers at the Flint Creek Valley Bank.

Photo by Claire Hendrickson



vidence of a small western town is everywhere . Hats are taken off for any inside function.

Photo by Claire Hendrickson

THE TOWN TODAY

Chapter Two

Philipsburg sits just far enough off of Highway 10A (the Pintlar Scenic Route) that a fast-moving traveler might pass with hardly a glance at the town that rises up against the mountains to the east.

But by following the invitation of a brightly painted billboard, which points the way to and extols the elevation (2,800 feet) of Philipsburg, drivers find the town's main street, a roadway that curves twice before straightening into the community's downtown after less than a mile.

Broadway bisects Philipsburg's three-block-long business district, and from that centerline the town stairsteps steeply up hills in both directions. The hill to the north contains a jumble of houses, churches and the glittering dome of the county courthouse; the slope on the south is more open and leads to the schools.

Arrayed on one side of Broadway are businesses ranging from a garage to a computer business, plus a church, the bank and newspaper. On the other side of the central street, one finds an alternating pattern of bars (five of them) and stores, plus the post office and town hall. There is one grocery store on each side of the street, and the town's two cafes are similarly situated. The architecture is a combination of old, ornate masonry buildings and some more modern facades. Many of the buildings were constructed in the late 1800s or early 1900s. Their survival and the town's history led to the designation

of much of Philipsburg as a National Historic District.

The appearance of Philipsburg probably hasn't changed all that much in 100 years. Neither has the number of people living there.

Philipsburg is home to 1,240 people, according to a 1986 census update (the population was 1,138 in the 1980 head count). The town numbered 1,128 in 1970 and 1,107 in 1960, and even in 1890 had 1,058 people.

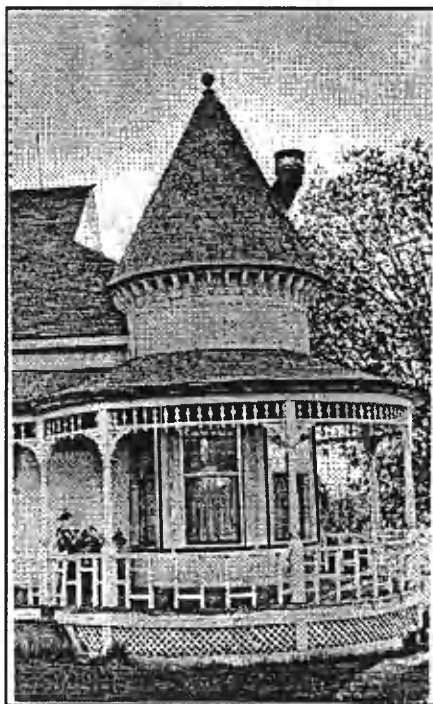
This consistency in population can be viewed either as a sign of stability or stagnation—or, as some in Philipsburg see it, a combination of both.

"This isn't the town for some people. There's no growth," says Bill Antonioli, mill supervisor for Contact Mill and Mining Co. He adds, however, that neither do people in Philipsburg expect much growth.

Philipsburg's modern-day population, according to the census breakdown, is almost entirely white, has a median age of 35 years, and is about equally split among males and females. A higher-than-normal portion of its populace—17.5 percent—is over 65 years old. Real-estate agent and County Commissioner Frank Waldbillig provides a different spin on the latter figure. By his estimate, Philipsburg contains 40 widows, most of them elderly, living alone in houses.

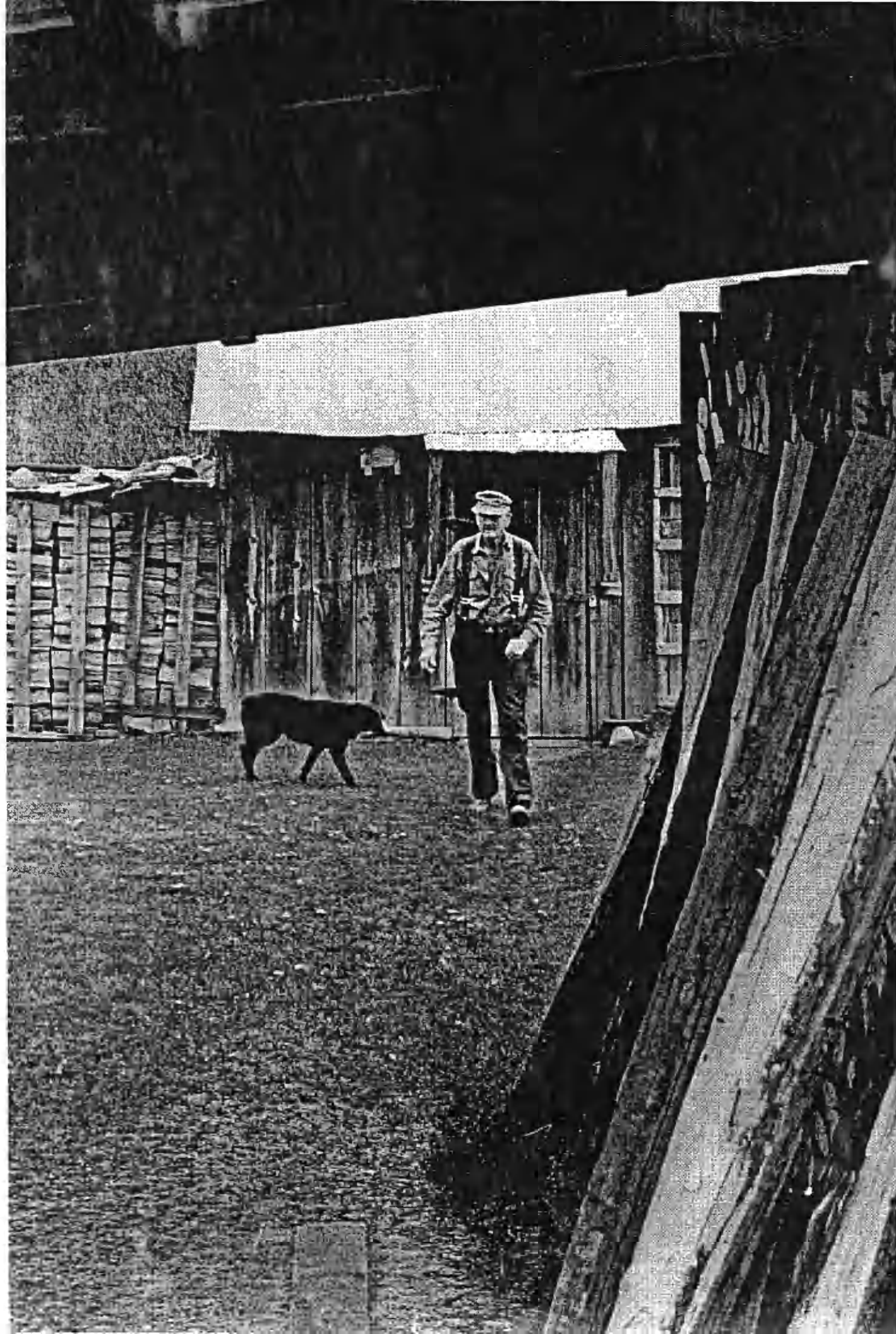
But statistics and architecture reveal little of Philipsburg in the 1980s. The town is more than just a mere compilation of age categories and vintage buildings.

Philipsburg (known more prevalently as simply "P-burg") still views itself as a mining town, despite the



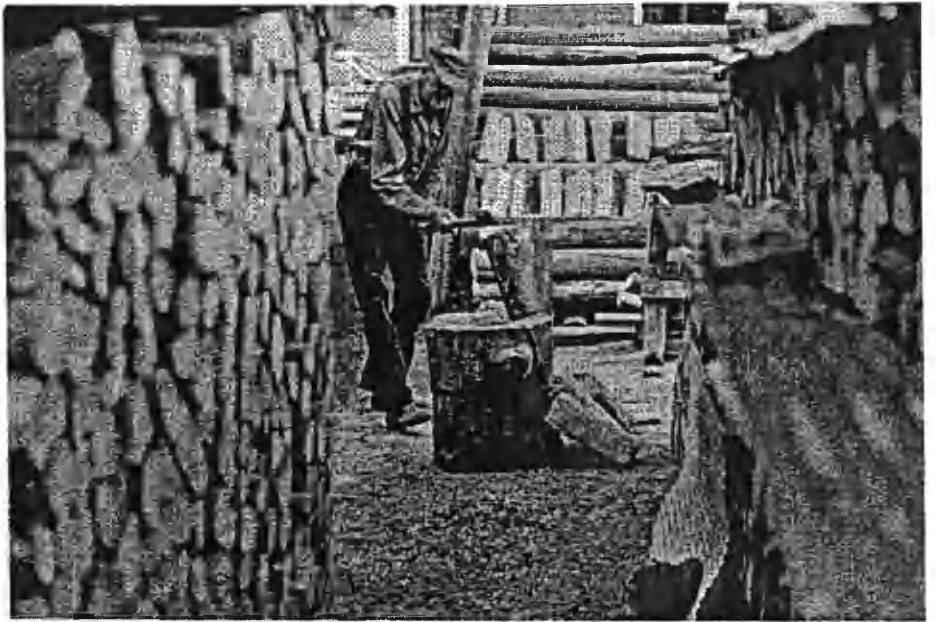
Historic houses abound.

Photo by Roger Maier





Photos by Jeff Gerrish



Louis "Tex" Crowley

*T*ownsfolk say Tex has more than enough wood for his lifetime. But that doesn't stop him from gathering and splitting more. Tex believes that you can never have too much wood. After all, Philipsburg winters are cold and long. During good weather Tex can almost always be found in his yard with his dog, Snip.

Maggie McDonald shares a humorous story with two regular White Front customers. Some of her customers, knew her when she was a girl growing up. Maggie says it's easy to kid people you've known all your life.



fact mining plays a much less important role than it did in the past. At times, mining still surfaces, but not much and not for long. In May 1987, the nearby Black Pine silver mine reopened, but it was shut down and 80 people were out of work nine months later. In that short time span, Philipsburg gained and lost its largest employer.

It is a town whose residents put down deep, deep roots. Jim Patten, age 101 in 1989, lives in the house in which he was born. The town's centenarian still makes regular walks downtown and occasional stops at bars. Heinie Winninghoff, whose auto dealership has been in business 60 years, has lived his life in two houses in Philipsburg—one across the street from the other. The living history of the town is found in lives like theirs. Second- and third-generation Philipsburgers are not uncommon, and some families' fourth generations are continuing the tradition.

Those roots can hold fast even during the frequent dismal economic days: It's a relatively common practice for a worker's family to remain in Philipsburg while he leaves town for a job. Larry and Veronica "Ronnie" Bolstad know that particular experience. When the mine shut down, Larry, a miner for 20 years, found work in Lewistown—280 miles away—while Ronnie and their son stayed in Philipsburg.

"As of right now, our roots are here," Ronnie says of Philipsburg. "We like it here. This is it."

And there is an allure to Philipsburg that attracts former residents back to it. The major stumbling block to their return is the lack of a job.

In one family with a long tenure in Philipsburg, the

McDonalds, the children all went off to college but returned to their home town, taking jobs as waitresses, bartenders and bank tellers. One of the daughters has since moved to Bigfork. But that clan is more the exception than the rule.

Dolly Page, a local historian and an unabashed booster of the town, describes Philipsburg's lure as a "sense of magic." Although she can't quite define that magic, she cites the freedom and peace that pervade Philipsburg as elements of the hold the town can have on people.

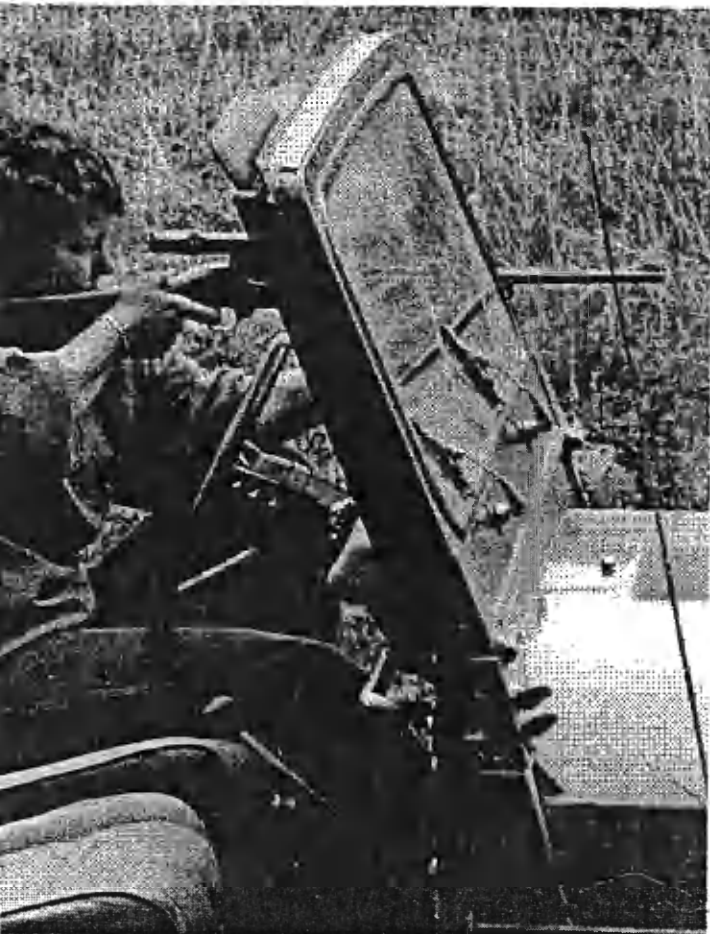
"I always tell everyone, 'Don't ever move here and stay longer than six months, because if you do, you'll never leave or you'll always come back,'" Page says, "and I have never missed on anybody."

What is it about small towns—Philipsburg in particular—that engenders this sort of admiration and adulation? Perhaps the mystique can be attributed to the small town's social closeness, extended feeling of family and almost womblike comfort that makes it "home."

Too, there is at least the perception that the isolated town is secure from the craziness and problems of bigger cities and the outside world. In this sense, the small town is an escape from urban reality and its attendant evils.

The simple amenities of the smaller community—the ability to go from one end of the business district to the other in a short walk, the nearness of outdoor recreation also contribute to small-town allure.

Winninghoff provides one example of the town's attraction as he recalls one time when a group of out-of-town hunters stopped by for gas and the men expressed



Maggie grew up in Philipsburg, went to Bozeman and completed a college degree in physical education. Now she's back—as a bartender at the White Front. She still enjoys shooting gophers on the old McDonald Ranch.



amazement that anyone would stay in one place for all his years. One of the men, however, glancing around the town and the mountains, said to Winninghoff, "What a nice place to spend your life."

To some, Philipsburg's biggest advantage is its location. Opportunities for hunting, fishing, camping, snowmobiling, hiking and skiing are close by the mountain town. "If you're an outdoor person, this is the place to be," says Mike Winninghoff.

Others echo that sentiment, often with a slight disclaimer. Rick Barkell, who runs the hardware store, cites the multitude of outdoor recreation around Philipsburg, and notes, "There's a few sacrifices you have to make to live in a small town—like money."

High school teacher Sandy Wattula calls Philipsburg an outdoorsman's paradise with both big attractions such as hunting and smaller ones such as mushroom hunting. "My son can get on his bike and in three minutes he can be fishing in Flint Creek; in five minutes he can be climbing a hill, and downhill skiing is only 20 minutes away."

Camera-shop owner Steve Neal offers a similar view: "In 10 minutes you can walk away from everybody and there's still clean air and mostly clean water."

Philipsburg is isolated from urban life, sitting 75 miles from Missoula and 56 miles from Butte, the two nearest Montana cities. Those distances are comfortable separations from cities for many in Philipsburg, yet still short enough a drive for shopping trips.

Bank President Zane Murfitt points out Philipsburg is not only "close to all the things we like to do outdoors," but

also close enough to go to Missoula to see sporting events.

People are also close to each other in Philipsburg, not always by choice but by the simple social stickiness of a small town. "Everybody knows what everybody else is doing in this town" is an oft-heard description of neighborliness and nosiness in Philipsburg.

"Everybody knows so-and-so's pregnant or so-and-so's fooling around," says Mike Kahoe, the administrator for both the hospital and the county. "People know all your business, or they think they do, but they're with you when the chips are down."

Living in what some term a goldfish bowl is not always pleasant for those in Philipsburg, but, as Wattula says, "You just kind of learn to go about your business and not worry about it."

Philipsburg holds seven churches of varying size and devotion, but it's a town where a regular paycheck is likely to be worshipped as much as more spiritual rewards.

The town proudly boasts its own 10-bed hospital and 13-bed nursing home. Given the percentage of elderly citizens in town, the nursing-home section often is expanded in capacity. Uniquely for a hospital that small, the Philipsburg facility offers respiratory therapy, a need based on mining-related afflictions.

A block away, the elementary school (built in 1896 and now the oldest operating school in Montana) sits in contrast to the much newer high school next door.

Philipsburg even has its own airport, Riddick Field,



On Friday and Saturday nights teens drag Broadway and search for parties.

Photo by Karen Nichol

named after one of its most famous residents. Merrill K. Riddick, known for his three Presidential campaigns which he conducted via Greyhound bus, died in March 1988 at the age of 93. He also was a teacher, prospector and pioneer aviator who barnstormed with Charles Lindbergh before his epic flight.

And the town has achieved fame of sorts in other ways. Philipsburg was the subject of the 1932 sociological study, "Small-Town Stuff," by Albert Blumenthal, as well as a Richard Hugo poem, "Degrees of Gray in Philipsburg."

"Small-Town Stuff," with its detailed and not always complimentary portraits of people and life in Philipsburg, was not warmly received. More than 50 years later, some people are still rankled by the book and its exposure of private lives, even though all names were changed and much of what Blumenthal wrote was apparently common knowledge.

Hugo's poem, which said of the town, "One good restaurant and bars can't wipe the boredom out," also is not the most popular reading by townspeople who consider it too unflattering a portrayal. The poem's gray and somber outlook, however, may be more reflective of the poet's state of mind than just the town as subject.

Some of what both authors wrote of Philipsburg is still accurate today, but not apt to be embraced by boosters of the town. As Hugo wrote, "...You walk these streets laid out by the insane, past hotels that didn't last, bars that did, the tortured try of local drivers to accelerate their lives. Only churches are kept up..."

Attitudes among Philipsburgers toward their town seem to range between two ends of the spectrum. Supporters like to say, "It's a great little town. We have everything we

There is much more color in Philipsburg than portrayed in a famous poem about the town.

need and there is plenty to do." At the other extreme are the naysayers who complain, "Nothing every happens in Philipsburg."

There is truth in both perspectives is, as small towns go, a generally good town, and usually not much earthshaking happens there. Those who have a need for constant intellectual stimulation or frequent cultural happenings are likely to be bored. Those

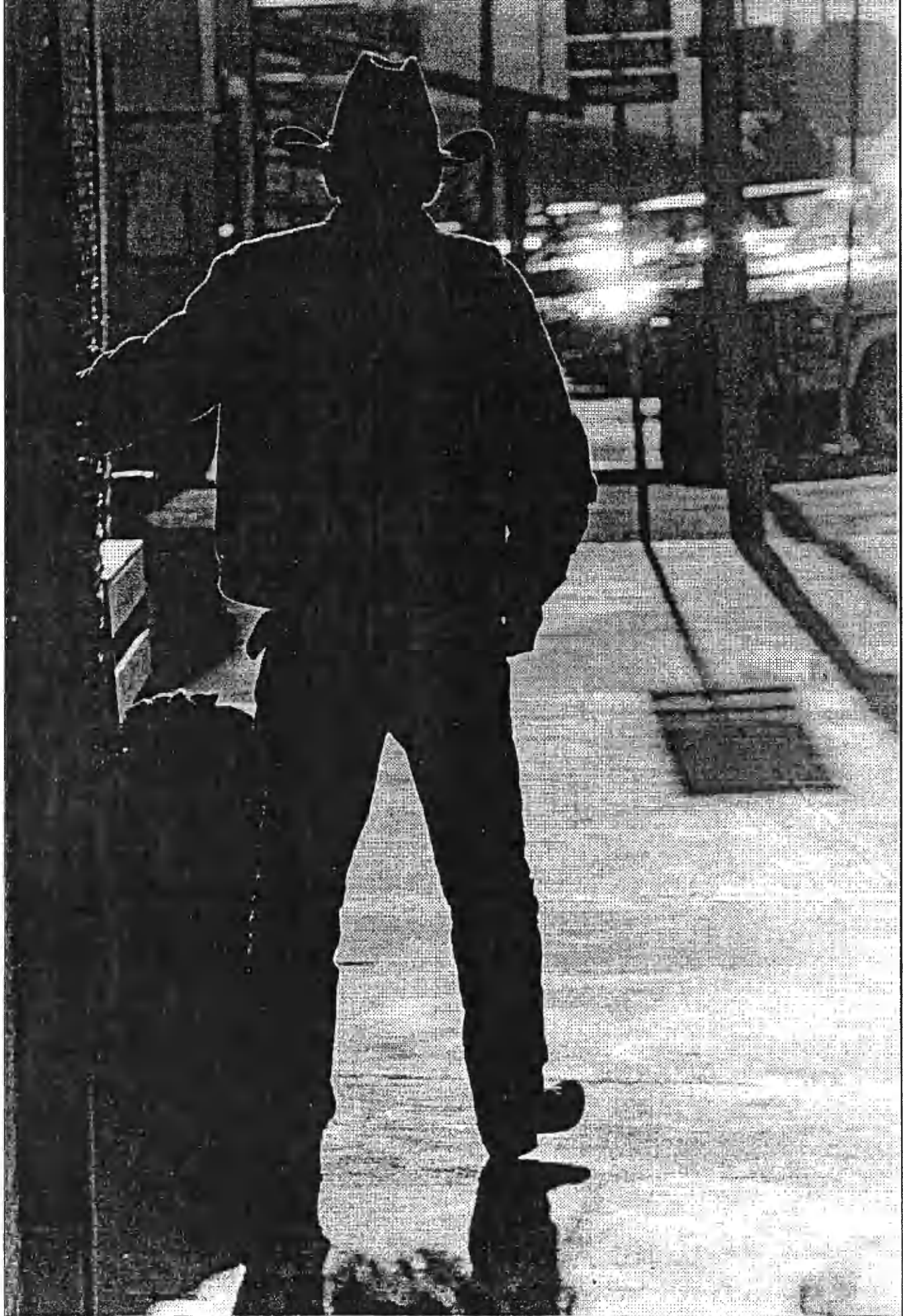
with simpler tastes and an appreciation of the outdoors and small-town sociability may find just what they want in Philipsburg.

There is also more color to be found there than Hugo portrayed: color in the surroundings, from the green hues of forested hillsides to the ambers of the valley ranchlands plus the frequent bright blue of the Philipsburg sky; color in the architecture, from reds to yellows and dozens of variations in between; but most of all, color in the townspeople, whether longtime residents or recent immigrants. There is, too, the colorful history of the town.

There are plenty of grays in Philipsburg—gray days, gray prospects for the future, gray areas—but there are as many brighter spots that shine through.

Some of the local color, plus a variety of viewpoints, likely to be encountered at Philipsburg's primary social centers: the bars. "I think people congregate naturally there [bars] to socialize as much as anything. It's a social event," Kahoe says.

They also congregate at school functions, since the schools and youths' activities are not only entertainment for the town but also a major focus of concern. That concern is nowhere more evident than when a controversy brews at the schools. As Jim Waldbillig puts it, "Schools are really



"Cowboy" Joe Johnson earned his nickname because of his attire.

Photo by Patty Reksten

touchy area. I've found people will lose all touch of rationality when it comes to schools."

Pat Brooks, who manages the liquor store, agrees. "People are friendly here, unless there's a controversy about schools."

Other levels of government, while they might not receive the same scrutiny or public involvement as do schools, face their own difficulties.

The Philipsburg Town Council in 1987 adopted a controversial ordinance banning dogs from downtown. It was an ordinance prompted by complaints "about dogs downtown doing their thing," says Mayor Nancy Owens. While the canine control produced some public resentment, the new law had its lighter side. One of the first canine offenders belonged to Dennis House, who dutifully paid his fine. House, a mechanic, also happens to serve on the town council. After relating the tale of his errant dog, he wryly remarked of the new law, "And I voted for it."

Beyond the local economy and the constant struggle to survive, both by now historically ingrained in the Philipsburg psyche, the town and its denizens face other troubles.

Drinking, particularly by youths but to a similar, albeit more legal extent by adults, pervades the town. One emigre from California describes teen drinking there as paltry compared to Philipsburg. And one of the industries which flourishes is the sale of alcohol, with a

fourth of the businesses downtown centered on alcohol sale and consumption.

The town also loses many of its young people after high school, since there's little available employment to hold them, and even fewer opportunities after college. As Bob Winninghoff says, "The biggest thing, like all of Montana, is there's really nothing for young people to do to find a job and make a living. It's hard to keep young people, but they like to come back."

Dolly Page agrees, "This is a town for old folks, mainly, because we haven't anything here for young people when they get out of school."

Prospects aren't that much brighter for women in Philipsburg. Jobs for them are scarce, too, and, as Wattula observes, "I've never seen more downtrodden women than here in Philipsburg."

And simply from an aesthetic perspective, Philipsburg is not overly attractive. Once a visitor looks beyond the historic architecture, the town is, as one resident describes it, "a series of houses in between junk cars." One tour of town in March 1988 reveals 95 obviously disabled and unusable vehicles littering yards, driveways and streets.

One defense of this practice is that since people are poor they need the cars for spare parts. A visitor once answered this by asking, "How many 1947 Studebakers do you own that you need those parts for?" There's not much response to queries like this. Perhaps the town's version of an antique-auto show is some subtle attempt at preserving

vehicular history. There are vintage ruins and mining ruins all around, why not a few cannibalized monuments to transportation?

Some houses and yards are tidily maintained; many others tend toward the run-down approach. The Rev. L. Bergman of St. Paul's United Presbyterian Church notes "Walk around, it looks like it's been neglected: yards a run down, junk in the backyards, paint on buildings peeling." He adds, "Maybe that junky upkeep reflects what people think about their own lives."

Philipsburg also faces the continual challenge which besets many small communities: much of what happens which has grave impacts on the town is far beyond its control.

Philipsburg can't dictate the price of silver which determines whether mines open or close. It can't influence timber demand. It is helpless to regulate the beef market.

When power companies in 1987 protested taxes on utility lines, the Philipsburg school district was powerless to recoup 27 percent of its revenues which became inaccessible. The town also faces a government mandate to filter its water supply.

All of these add up to a sense of helplessness in the face of external influences. One high school senior sums it up, "Just like anywhere else, we have outside forces working against us."

At the same time, notwithstanding the



Junk cars can be found strewn throughout the hills of Philipsburg.

Photo by Todd Goodrich

unalterable outside influences, Philipsburgers persevere and do what they can to endure in their own town. In spite of all that could steer one toward a gloomy outlook, there is a stubborn optimism among many that the most pressing problems or setbacks can't supersede.

This upbeat demeanor manifests itself in what may be a uniquely Montanan attitude that is part gallows humor, part facing reality. "If I'm going to be broke and starve, the saying goes, 'I might as well do it in a beautiful place'."

Overheard: The Three W's

Listening to conversations in Philipsburg, whether in cafes, stores, bars, club meetings, the bank lobby or on sidewalk, familiar refrains are heard.

Beyond the social chatter and exchanges of information about neighbors (both of which are constants) there are three common themes that are overheard: weather, work and wilderness.

Weather influences a lot of what the outdoor-oriented citizens do, so it's a prime topic of discussion. The conditions of roads after a sudden morning snowfall, moisture amounts for ranching, the water level for fish in Rock Creek, weather hindrances to woods work, tracking snow for hunting, sunshine for softball, winds expected for the weekend football game—all these are woven among the conversations in Philipsburg.

In this town, weather is a watchword for a wide variety



Photo by Karen Nichols



Photos by Michelle Pollard



Photo by Wendy Norgaard



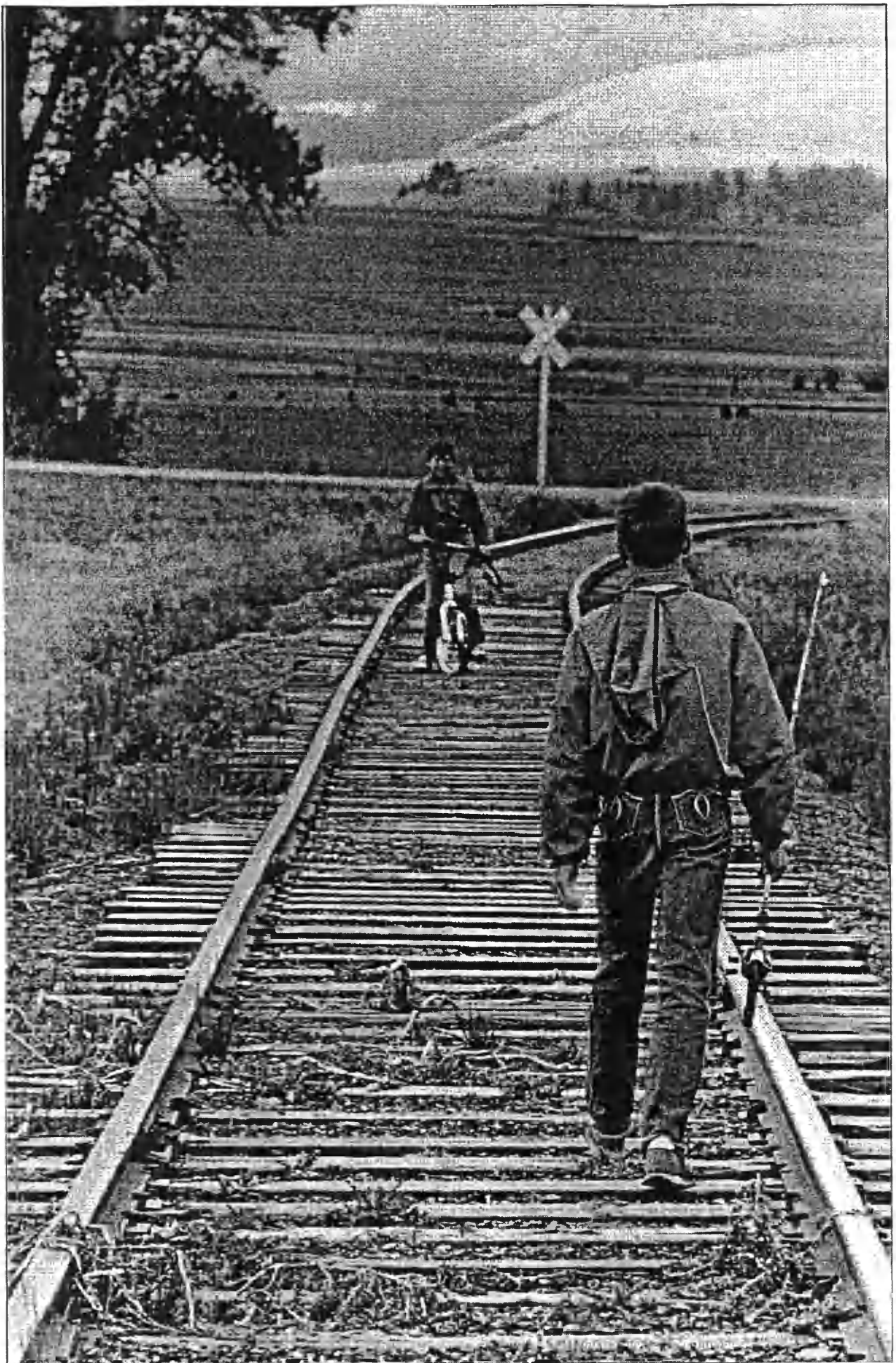
An excursion on Broadway in P-Burg used to mean that dogs could mingle freely with babies and those who stopped to talk in front of town hall. Now a leash is required for such an outing.



Photo by Sheila Melvin

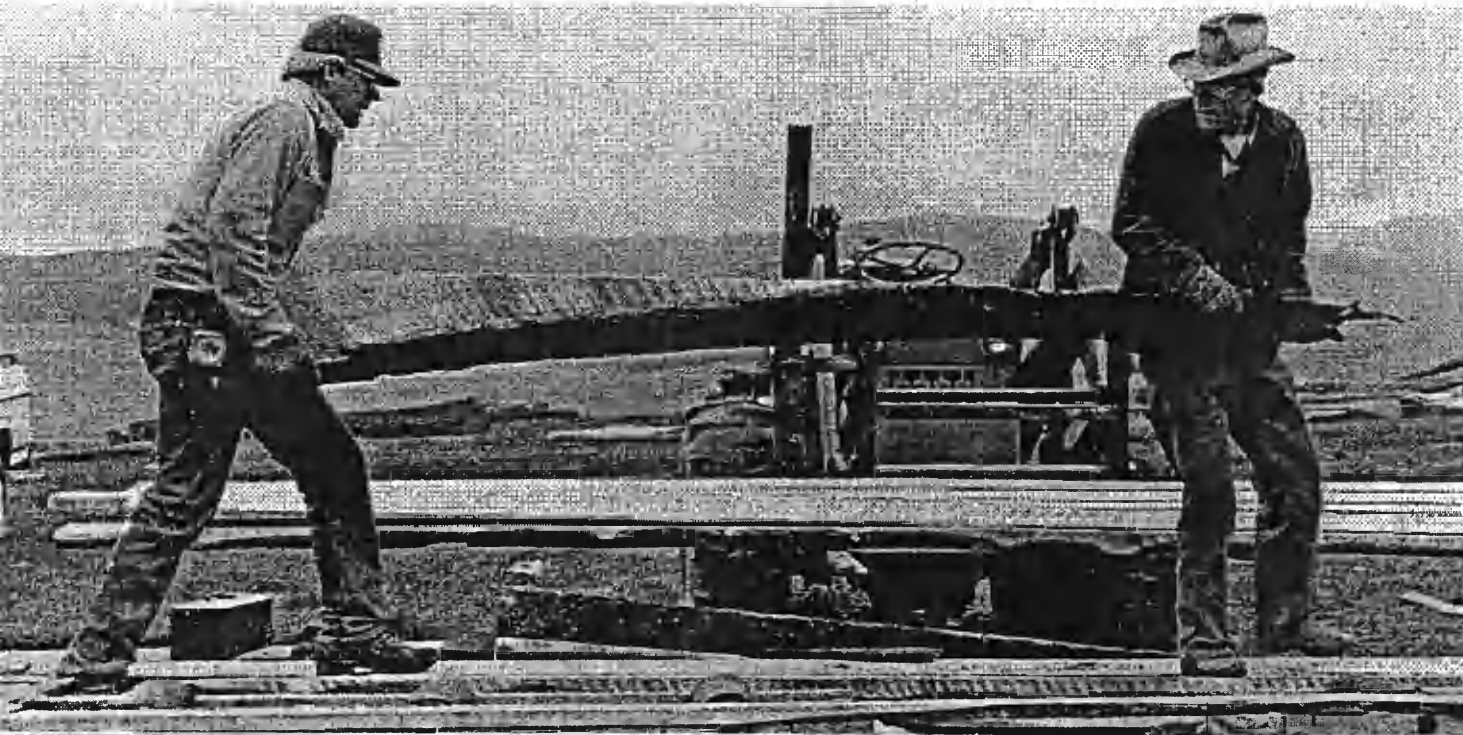
Dog Days in Philipsburg

They roamed the town freely for awhile, free of leashes and fences. But shortly after these pictures were taken, Philipsburg dogs no longer had the entire town as their playground. The new dog ordinances were not overwhelmingly well received by Philipsburgers.. Some dogs had been coming downtown to work with their owners for years. But P-Burgers have adapted. Even Tequilla, the town dog who always sat unleashed in front of the library, now complacently accepts a leash.



Most P-Burg residents believe that more wilderness designations in the area will reduce job possibilities. There seems to be enough countryside for Doug Gurski, who encounters his brother riding the railroad tracks. Doug is on his way to his favorite fishing hole on Flint Creek.

Photo by Brian Keller



Jim and Frank Wallbillig start work early at their sawmill. Jim built the mill himself. His father, Frank, works on the ranch as well as at the county courthouse. He is a longtime county commissioner.

Photo by Todd Goodrich

recreational and occupational concerns, not just as a conversation starter. There is equally as much serious discussion as small talk about weather.

While weather is important in Philipsburg dialogue, work is a critical topic. In a community where jobs in full swing one day may be gone the next, there's often an urgency when the talk turns to work.

Talk of which outfit is hiring or laying off, or is rumored to do so, can produce turned heads and attentive ears 20 feet away, or evoke a comment from across the room. The subject may be as big as Black Pine mine on the brink of closing, or as small as a logging operation adding one employee. Whether it involves 80 jobs or one, it's important here.

If a new company is exploring mineral holdings, it's cause for hopeful conversation. If an out-of-work laborer is leaving town and family behind to find a job elsewhere, it can give rise to muttered condolences and sympathetic words of support.

A new job that's available, whether it's in county government or as a store clerk or a salesman, is likely to be discussed.

The nature of work itself is a topic for talk, too. Over an afternoon beer and a shot, a construction worker will trade tales of his day at work with a rancher's litany of labor or a shopkeeper's stories.

"How's business" is more than a simple salutation in Philipsburg, but rather marks an earnest interest in what's going on with others in the working world.

While the mention of work can often pique conversational curiosity, the word wilderness is almost sure to make people in Philipsburg bristle. Several areas around Philipsburg, from the Flint Creek drainage to the Sapphires, are being studied for

Congressional designation as additional wilderness. The prospect of additional land being precluded from development and motorized vehicles does not sit well with Philipsburg's people, and they frequently vent their anger and anguish over the subject.

Over breakfast at a town cafe, one elderly resident reading the morning paper scoffs over an article about wilderness.

"I sure don't want any more wilderness," he says to the stranger next to him. "What do they want it for? You can't take a vehicle in there, you can't cut any timber and you can't do any mining work."

There is strong opposition voiced to new wilderness, usually in the context of jobs. "You can't take 100,000 acres out of a resource-based county and not lose jobs," says County Commissioner Bob Ivie.

Wilderness opposition often is paired with vilification of those who support it. Often targeted in conversations are the hated Missoula environmentalists who push for wilderness. Similar excoriation is reserved for the Congressional delegation working on wilderness legislation. At one Philipsburg service-club gathering, a heartfelt and only half-facetious motion was made to declare one Montana Congressman an "asshole." It didn't reach a vote, but it drew support from those present.

One Philipsburg man theorizes it would be difficult to find 50 people in the entire county who favor more wilderness. The depth of antagonism expressed when the conversation turns to wilderness indicates that estimate may not be inaccurate.

One interchange at a county commissioners' meeting is a case in point. A resident says to the commissioners, "We ought to go snowmobiling up there [proposed wilderness] before they lock it up." A commissioner responds, "We've decided we're going to go up there anyway."

McCann ran the day-care center for four years. He still coaches youth in the AAU wrestling program and is an avid skier who recently began downhill racing.



McCann serves lunch at the day-care center before taking the tots to the park to play.



Day care center closes doors after four years

Right next door to the hospital/nursing home in Philipsburg, there used to be a day care center.

The laughter of little children added something missing from the usual nursing home surroundings.

There in the basement you could find Mike or Sue McCann and a flock of youngsters.



Mc Cann, a Vietnam veteran who returned without the use of one of his legs, doesn't let his handicap get in his way. He's been president of the School Board and has served as a wrestling coach. It used to be quite a sight to see the kids following Mike back up the hill to the day-care center after he had

treated them all to ice cream. The scene was reminiscent of the Pied Piper.

The McCanns are out of the day-care business now. After four years of running it, new state regulations closed the doors. The McCanns said the new regulations would require that they hire additional help.

"You couldn't really support yourself with it anyway," McCann

says. We don't make enough to hire people."

It was a challenge starting the day-care program in Philipsburg, McCann says, because the center had to overcome the tradition that children were taken to grandparents or friends for care.





Lance gets comforted by McCann after a fall.



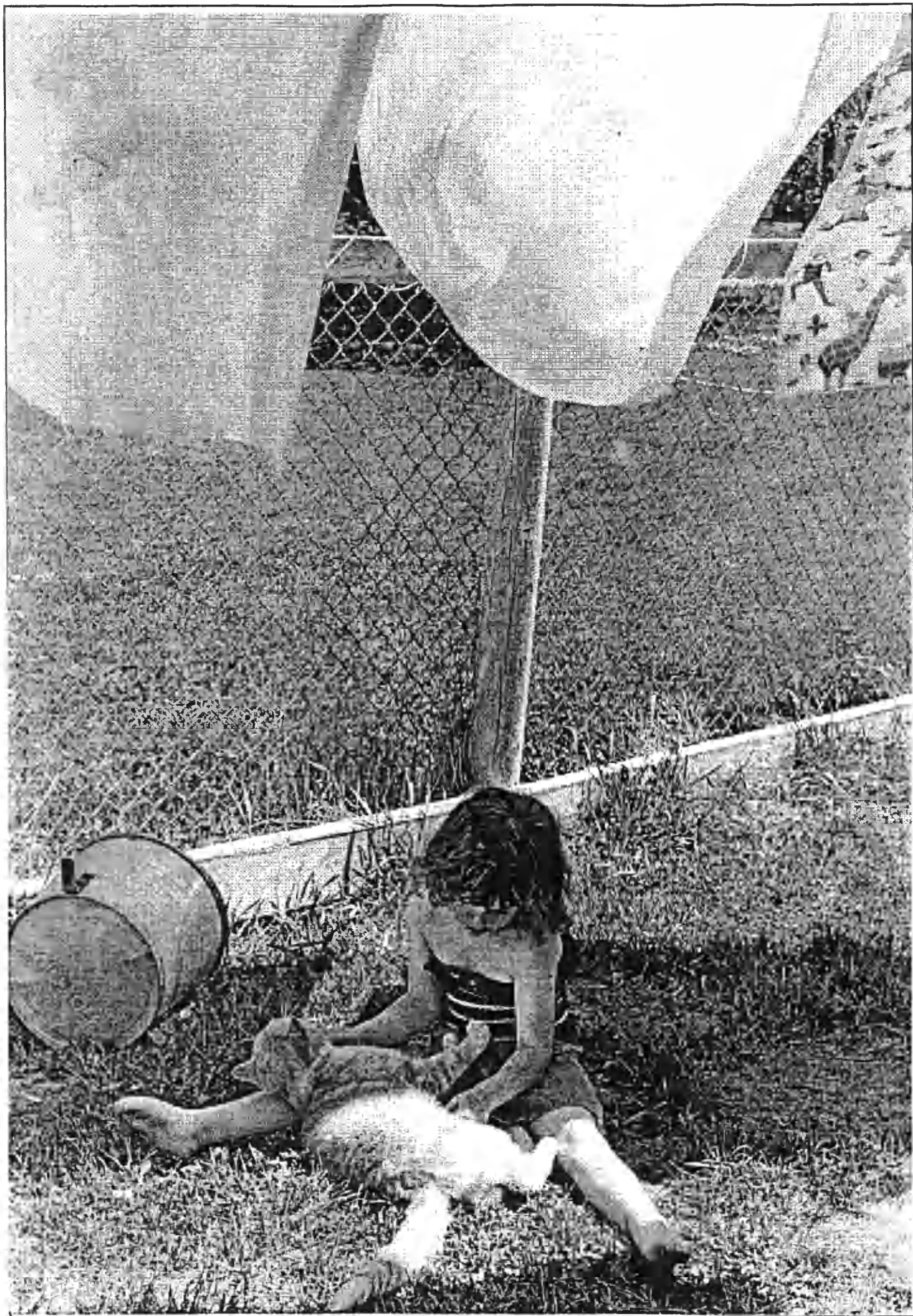
Tot Lot day-care kids enjoy an ice cream treat.

Photo by Michelle Pollard.

ittany, one of McCann's charges, plays hide and seek while Mike talks to Jim O'Loughlin, Philipsburg maintenance man. After a trip to the park and for ice cream, McCann leads his Tot Lot children back up the hill to the center.

Photos by Sheila Melvin





Jessica White with her cat, Sam, in the afternoon shade of drying sheets.

Photo by Karen Nichols



High school math teacher Jim Hebnes helps Justin Vietor work on a problem. Hebnes is now retired.

Photo by Greg Van Tighem

YOUTH Chapter Three

Natural resources—their extraction and development—have always been the mainstay of Philipsburg.

A different approach to Philipsburg's resources, however, is voiced by one local teacher who proclaims, "Youth is the only resource that really matters in this town."

Although this assessment might not be universally shared, the youth of Philipsburg are an important focus for both family and community.

Philipsburg has 300 students of school age, and their activities are a main attraction, not only for parents but others in town. Whether it's little-league baseball, youth wrestling, school music shows or high school sports events, townspeople are likely to take a deep interest.

The schools, of course, are the center of activity. According to former school board member Davee McGuire, "What goes on there in the school with the kids is the heart of the community and the whole town revolves around it."

The size of the town is considered by many parents to be a bonus for their children. Doug Morrison sees much greater opportunities available for his two children, particularly in sports, than they would find in a larger community. "Everybody pretty much can participate," he says. Longtime resident Dolly Page adds, "You can only be 120 pounds and play football in Philipsburg, and the kids all can make the team and do."

Beyond school, children can participate in everything from scouting to sports to church groups, but not all the opportunities for children are necessarily organized. There are still plenty of chances for simply playing, as well as the area's many offerings in outdoor recreation.



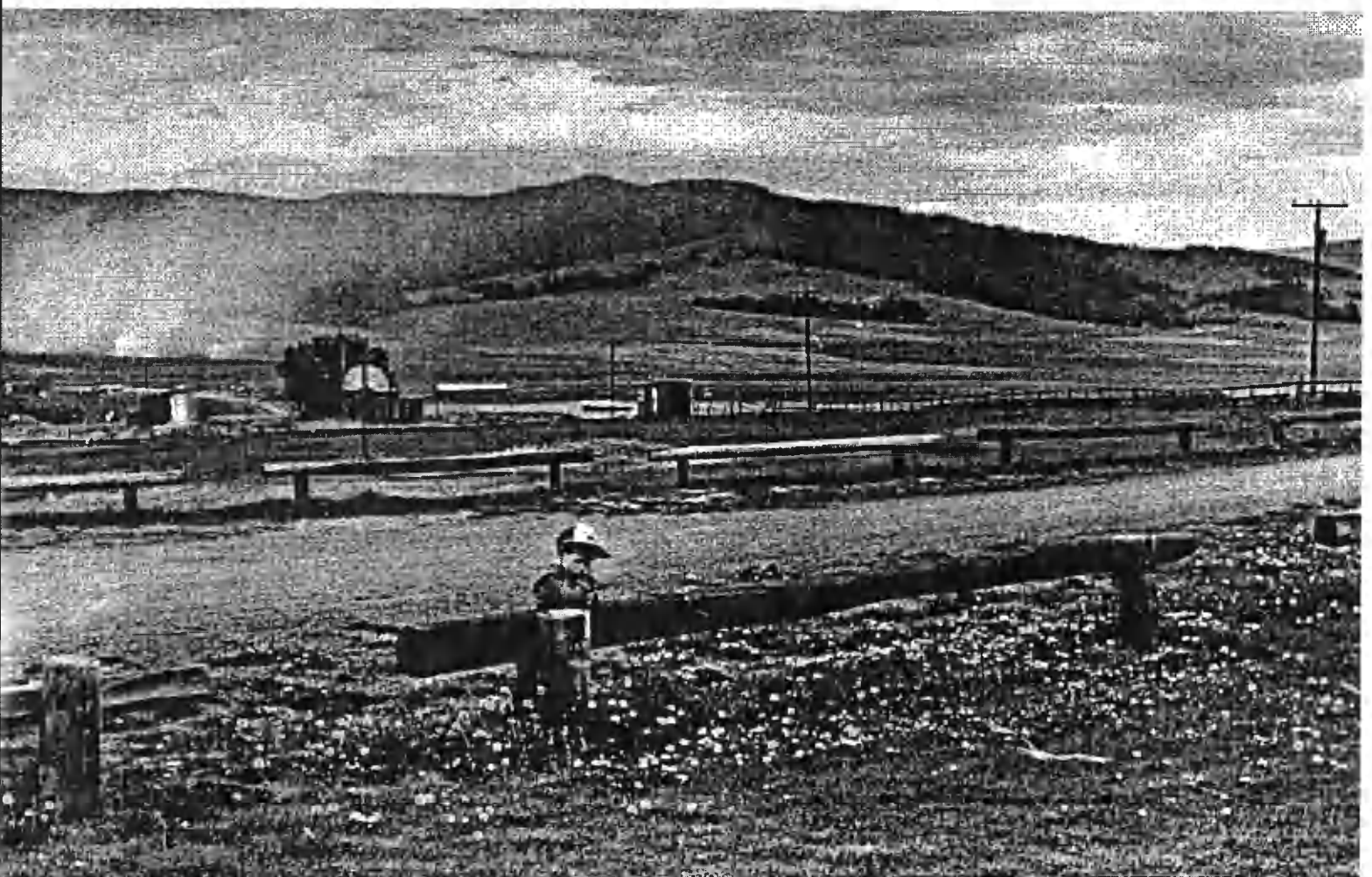
Lori Shaw practices moments before a concert.

Photo by Todd Goodrich

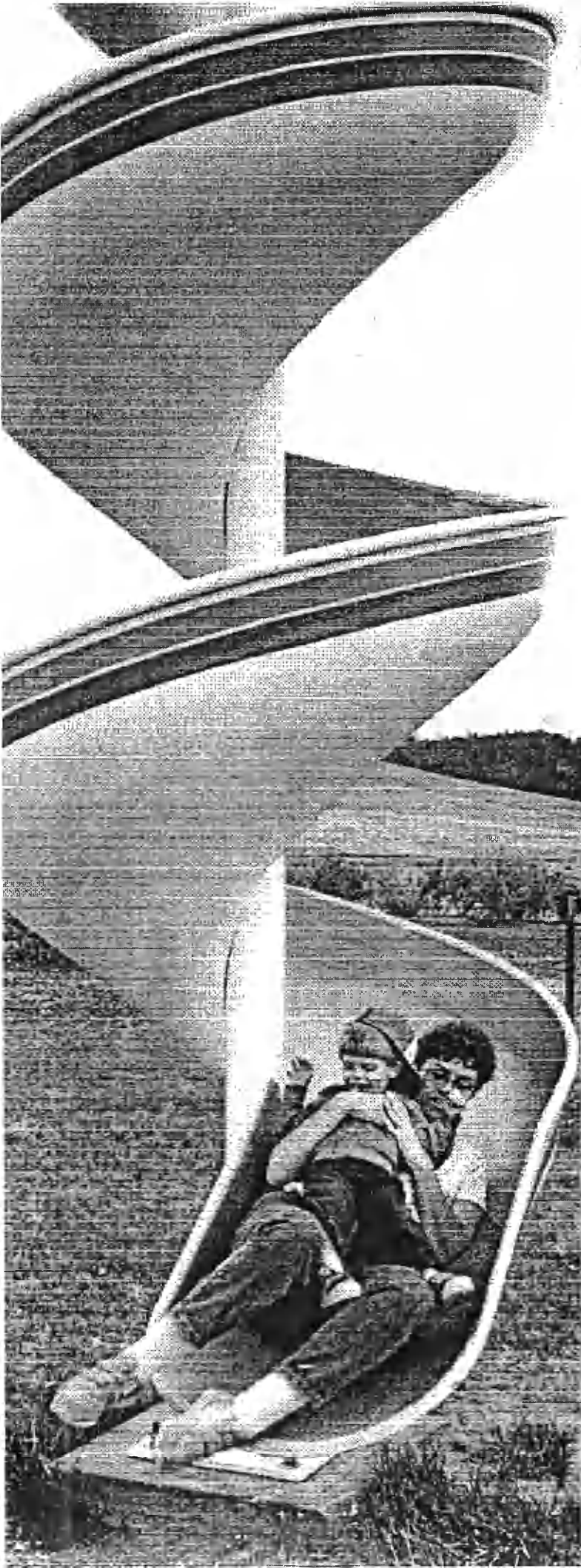


Jeremy Bolstad has miles to go before he sleeps

When you're young and live in a small town, there is an endless array of things to do. Young Jeremy Bolstad can't quite find enough hours in the day to satisfy him. He avoids a nap and then spends some time playing with his mom, Veronica. He even manages to talk her into going down the slide one more time.



In spite of good intentions, Jeremy shows signs of tiring as he plays in and around Philipsburg.



Photos by Claire Hendrickson

Larry Bolstad did work at the Black Pine Mine while it was open. Now he works hundreds of miles away and manages to make it home for weekends. He found some time to assemble a trike for son Jeremy's second birthday.



Younger children seem to have no problem occupying themselves in Philipsburg. Many of the venues which used to occupy teen-agers, however, are gone. Philipsburg's movie theater, soda fountain, bowling alley and pool hall have all closed. The movie theater was reopened the summer of 1989. "Those were a big part of social life for teens," says Gordon Shepherd, who frequented those places in his youth.

High school teacher Larry Veis agrees. "There isn't anything for students to do in this town except sports, music and camping," he says.



Dustin Morrison and Chelsea Paul eat ice cream and play pinball.



Photo by Jeff Gerrish

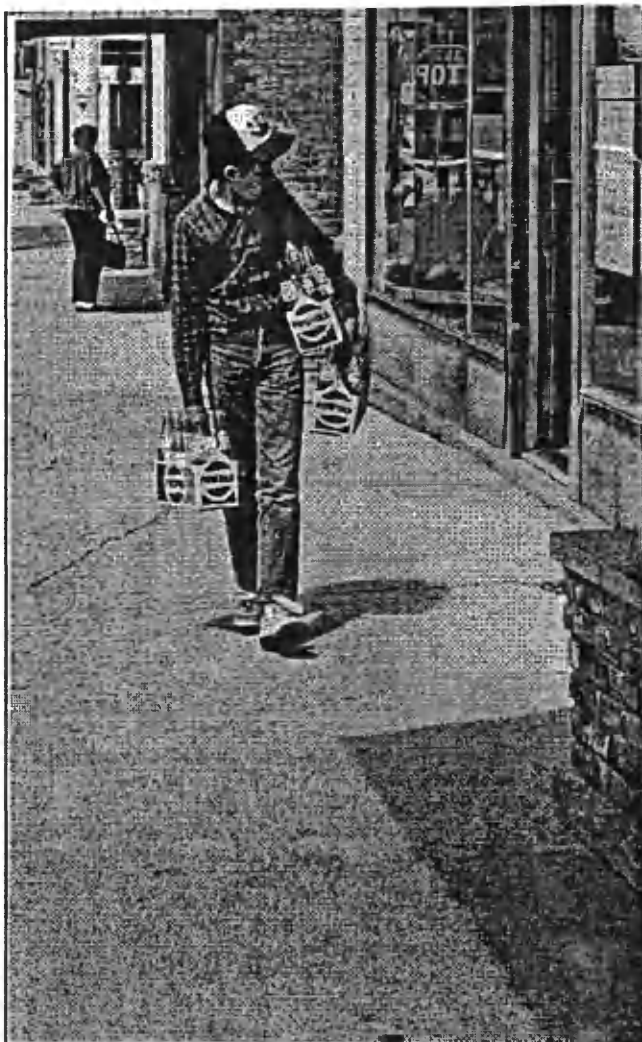


Photo by Sheila Melvin



Photo by Jim Dav

Childhood pleasures are the same in any town. You can earn a little money by returning pop bottles or spend some time dressing "Barbie" dolls. Children of all ages can simply run through a field of dandelions as Joey Hiltunen does.

Photo by Jim Davidson



*A cigarette break
after school.*

*Photo by
Michelle Pollard*





Students in a computer class work on a program that keeps and averages test scores. Students say that armed with a good basic education, they're leaving P-Burg. Photo by Todd Cox

THE CLASS OF 1988

Youth often may be seen as the future of a community, but if Philipsburg's Class of 1988 follows its announced path, its future and the town's may diverge widely.

With graduation two months away, most of these high school seniors said they were aiming to leave their home town and didn't plan to return, except to visit. An interview with 16 of the 24 seniors produced a near-unanimous chorus of career plans that didn't include Philipsburg.

"There's nothing here to offer kids our age," one senior laments. According to another, "It's nice if you're married and you have a good job, but if you're single, there's really no jobs or anything for you."

The shortage of jobs is one reason behind the planned exodus, while boredom with Philipsburg and an interest in the outside world also contribute to the restlessness. "They tell us there's real life out there. We're going to go find it," one student says.

Individual destinations varied, but one senior believed that her classmates, in contrast to other classes, at least had places to go. "We have almost 100 percent going to college or going into the armed forces, or already having a job lined up—just having something to do."

They express an interest in enjoying the amenities Philipsburg can't offer, including movie theaters (the movie theater was reopened for shows in the summer of 1989), shopping malls and fast-food restaurants. They also

They express an interest in enjoying the amenities Philipsburg can't offer, including shopping malls and fast-food restaurants.

say they want to get out of the ever-present community observation. "We want to have our own identity," one says. From another: "You want to be kind of a secluded person." They say both of those are difficult, if not impossible, given the close surveillance people give one another in Philipsburg.

Teachers and townspeople note that these students' desire to leave isn't unusual, but not all those who plan will escape Philipsburg. In addition,

many would come back if they could find work, the ad observers note.

High school counselor Harvey Carter says that on average, half of Philipsburg's high school graduates go to college, others go into the armed forces and some get jobs in the area. "But some of them just fall through the cracks," Carter says. "They don't really have a goal." They are the ones, he notes, who after a year are likely to be regular patrons down at the bars.

One of the seniors' chief complaints about Philipsburg is the lack of things to do outside school. "You have to make your own fun," one says. That fun may mean four-wheeling in the woods, video parties or simply cruising the main drag of Philipsburg (all three blocks of it).

Drinking and other drug use (although alcohol is the chemical of choice for most youths) are hardly uncommon youth phenomena in Philipsburg. To some adults, teen drinking is the biggest problem facing the town; others consider it a normal part of growing up and aren't concerned.

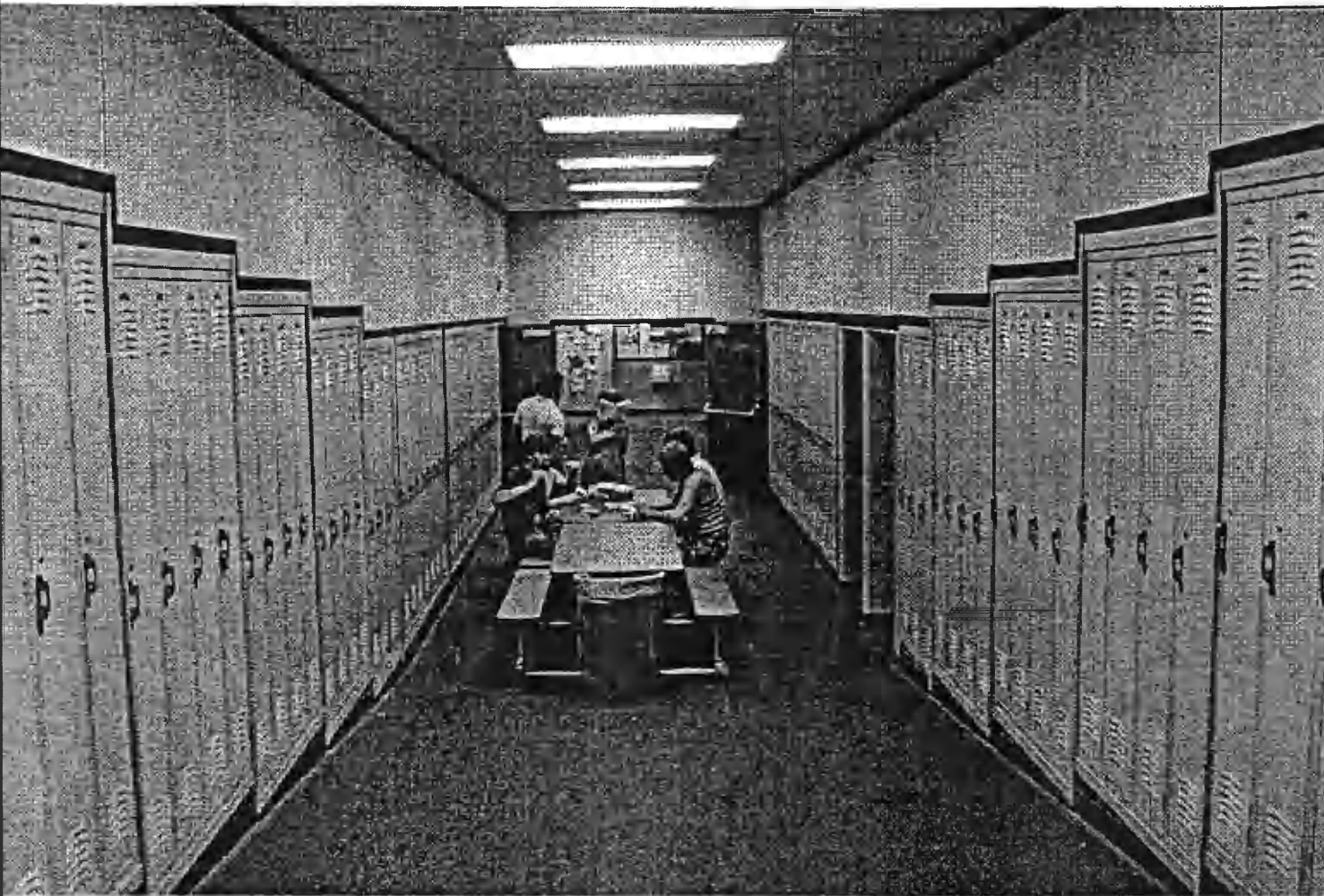


Photo by Todd Goodrich



After the high school gymnasium and cafeteria burned, students were forced to eat lunch wherever they could find space. The quiet hallways are filled between classes.

Photo by Jeff Gerrish



Photo by Jeff Gerr

The seniors aren't shy about admitting their partying ways. Friday, Saturday, Sunday night—they tick off the recent memorable parties they say they have enjoyed. One student points out, though, that the party scene diminishes during sports seasons. "We're in between seasons now, so everyone's going to go crazy now and then it's going to calm down," she says.

Party-bound students also play a continual game of cat and mouse with sheriff's deputies. The lawmen earnestly try to ferret out the location of teen-age drinking festivities; the youths do their best to obscure the sites or send deputies on false alarms. Sometimes the subterfuge succeeds, but the number of seniors who have been busted—a handful admitted to it at the interview—is evidence that's not always the case.

Student drinking was a major factor behind the establishment in 1987 of a "chemical-free youth center" in downtown Philipsburg. The center, open only in the summer, offers darts, pool, pinball and foosball. Its inaugural season had mixed results—there was some vandalism and chaperon staffing was a problem.

Seniors generally favor the center, but complain about the lack of chaperons. According to one student, "Parents

want us to keep off the streets, but none of them came down and chaperoned."

The center is now closed.

In spite of their professed urgency to leave the town the members of the Class of 1988 said they liked many aspects of Philipsburg. They cite the scenery, outdoor recreation, education they received and the people as advantages they appreciate. "If you grew up here, you grew up with everybody, and you're like a big family," student says of the closeness of the senior class.

The youths also are concerned about the future of the town. "It's kind of a ghost town now," one boy says. Another notes, "If people aren't careful, this town is going to end up like Granite," referring to the nearby mining town which is empty.

Other students foresee a future Philipsburg populated largely by older people. One girl says the town could end up composed only of "retirement and drunks."



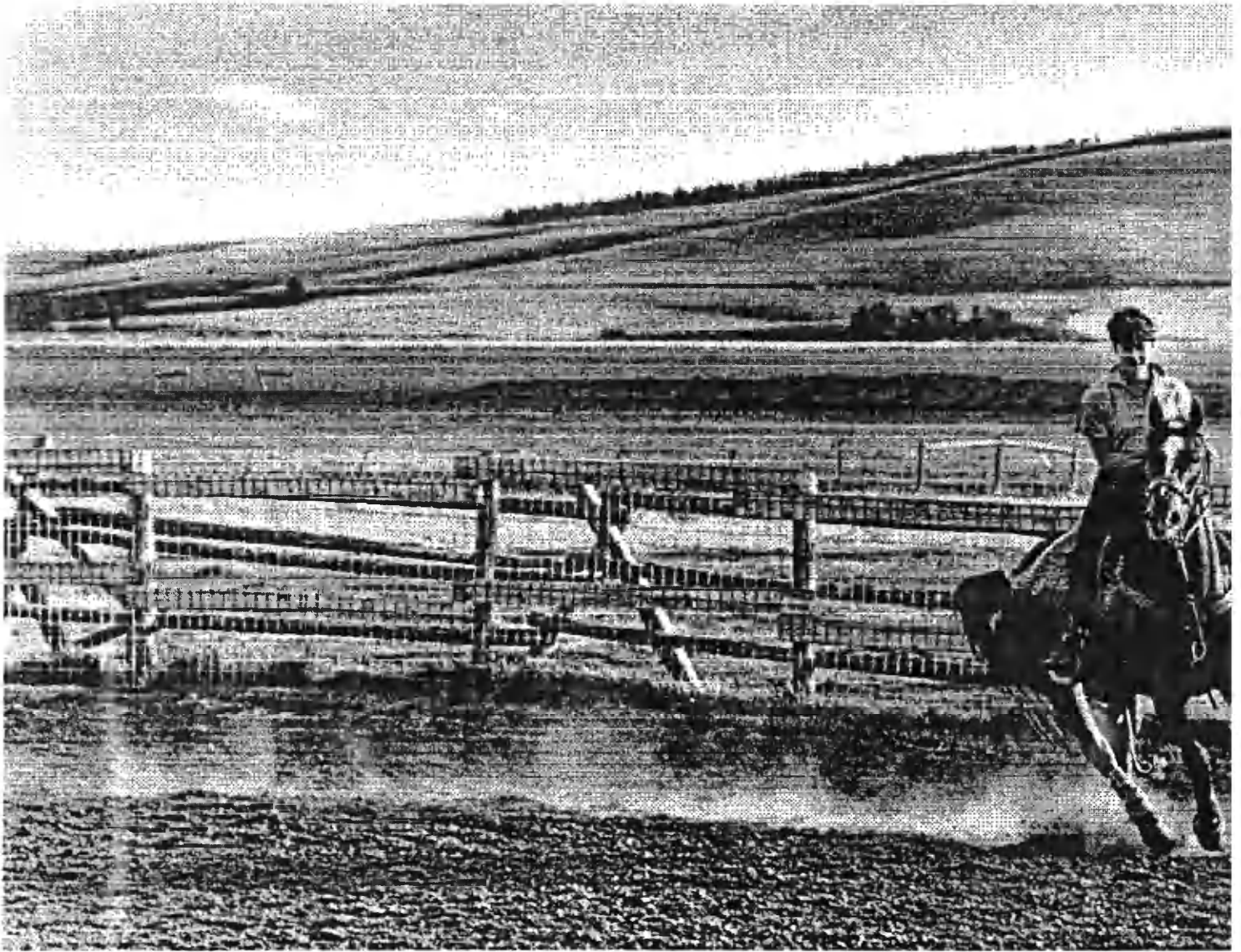
1987 a non-alcoholic teen center opened in P-Burg. It hasn't been open in 1989.

Photo by Sheila Melvin



Mary Jo Byam helps Chris Gessele with his studies. The Philipsburg high school student volunteered to work with the boy. All work goes better when you take time for a hug.

Photos by Jeff Gerrish



SOCIAL LIFE

Chapter Four

Gossip, rumors, the grapevine—in many ways word of mouth establishes the social pattern of Philipsburg.

In his 1932 sociological study, Albert Blumenthal cited gossip as the fuel that ran the town and kept people in line with community standards. That may be no less true 50-plus years later, and in fact some would say the role of gossip has expanded.

Word travels fast in this little town. "We have a grapevine that's absolutely colossal," says Dolly Page. "Something can happen and in 20 minutes it's all over town."

In a town where everybody knows everybody, residents keep a curious eye and ear on what their neighbors are doing. "People keep pretty close track of what's going on," says Jim Waldbillig. "There's a 12-hour turnaround time on anything that happens. We can't wait for the Philipsburg Mail [the town's weekly newspaper] to come out. We have to know right away."

Rick Barkell notes that the swift-traveling news

sometimes tends to be exaggerated. "You can go from a sprained finger to an amputated arm overnight."

High school students are keenly aware of the information system. "You can do something and before you even get home, your parents know about it," one g says.

How accurate is the community's oral news service? One estimate by youths figures about 50 percent is true. one teen-ager says, "The next day it's pretty true, but th week later it's got a lot on it."

Not all the interest or information is necessarily prurient or personal. "In spite of it all, there's a genuine concern for people," Mike Kahoe says. "If you break yo leg or somebody dies," neighbors want to know so they help, he notes.

The hospital administrator relates that many people him whenever the helicopter ambulance from Missoula down at the hospital. He attributes this not to nosiness,

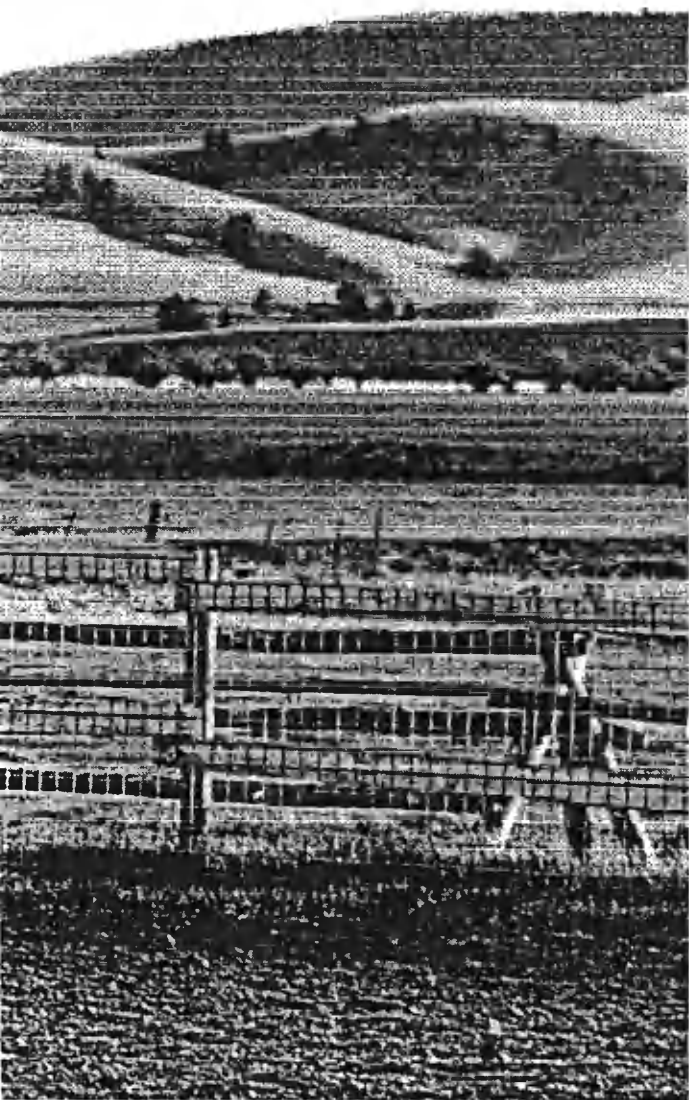


Photo by Todd Goodrich

Carolynn Vietor rides her horse at the Rocking Chair Ranch outside of Philipsburg. She tries to practice barrel riding every day. Carolynn and her husband Bill both compete in rodeos and the townfolk pay close attention to their success. Below, kids have no problems socializing.



Photo by Michelle Pollard

real concern about whom the patient might be.

Residents point out ruefully that not the interest in others' affairs is so rustic, but they've learned to take it stride. Living in a "goldfish bowl" is the hardest adjustment Sandy Wattula had to make when she moved to Philipsburg 10 years ago. While the observation isn't blatant, she notes, it's there. She terms people-watching an "avocation" in Philipsburg. Ronnie Bolstad considers the gossip to be a form of entertainment for townspeople.

Wattula says the response is simply not to worry about being in the public eye. Even though Waldbillig notes, "You can't get away with anything" because of the scrutiny, "It does make you a little more creative. It's a fact of life."

The oral tradition also plays a role in defining prevailing opinions toward town issues. An informal yet undeniable "coffee-shop consensus" often is produced which can serve as a determinant of public policy. Agencies

In a town where everybody knows everybody, residents keep a curious eye and ear on what their neighbors are doing.

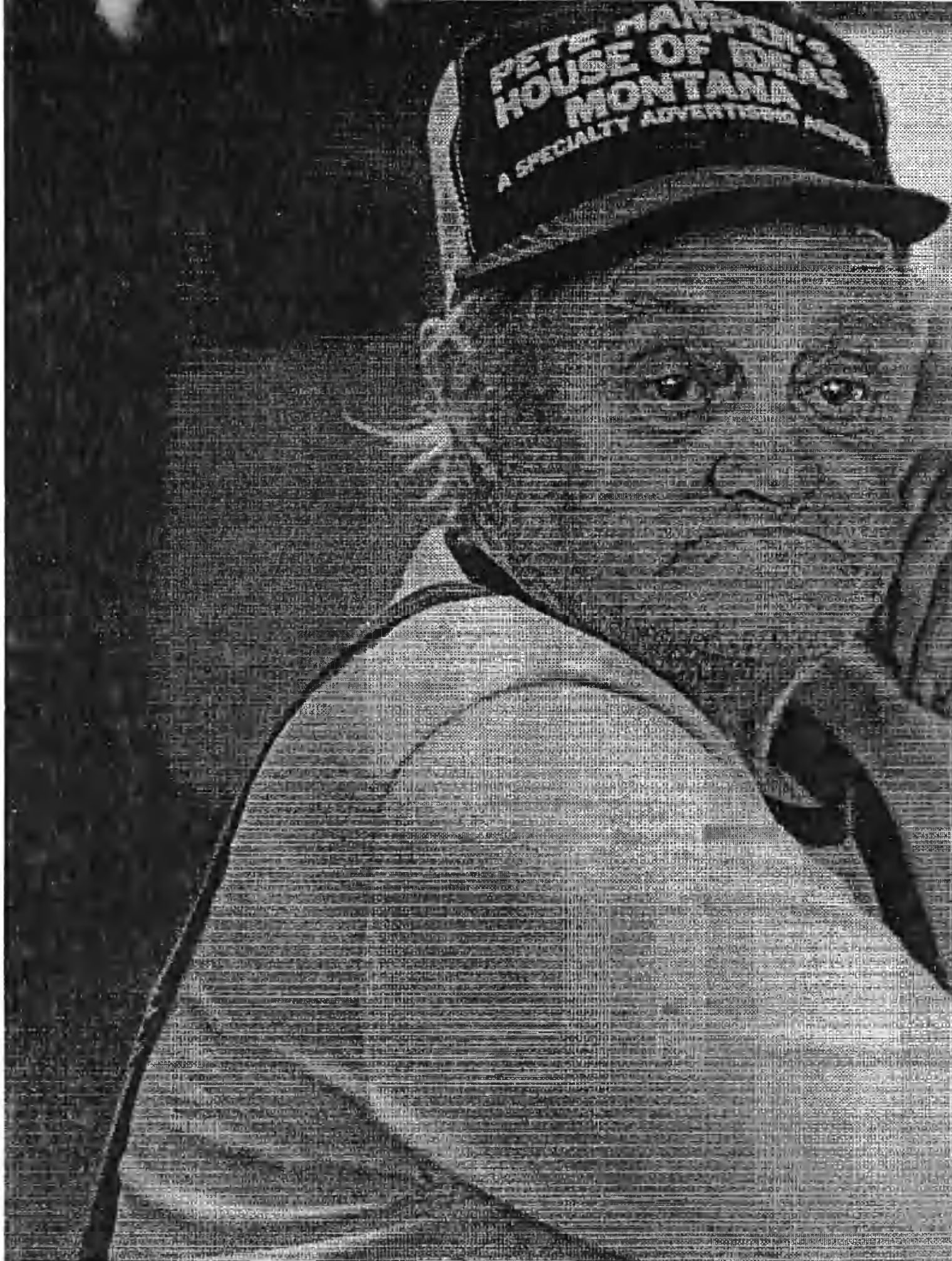
of government, whether the school board or town council, may conduct discussions in formal meetings, but their constituents and some participants could well be molding their viewpoints in the public forum of a cafe or bar.

It is the bars of Philipsburg that make up the dominant social center for adults in the town. It's widely agreed that most of Philipsburg's social life is found there. Everyone from town leaders to laborers can be encountered

in Philipsburg's half dozen drinking establishments (five in a two-block span of main street and a sixth out on the highway).

Some people are such regular patrons that they practically could be considered as having office hours on the barstool. Others merely stop by for a quick drink and some conversation.

The bars are by no means always crowded, although quitting time for workers usually means a surge in bar patronage. The "aftershifter"—a beer and a shot—is still a



Leroy "Shorty" Rickard is a regular patron at the White Front Bar on Philipsburg's Main Street. With little urging Shorty will tell even a stranger the story of his life.



Photo by Jim Davidson



When Albert Silva discovered he had a flat tire, friend Bill Antonioli helped change it. The two ordered a shot of tequilla from local pub to aid their efforts.

Photo by Bob Cushman

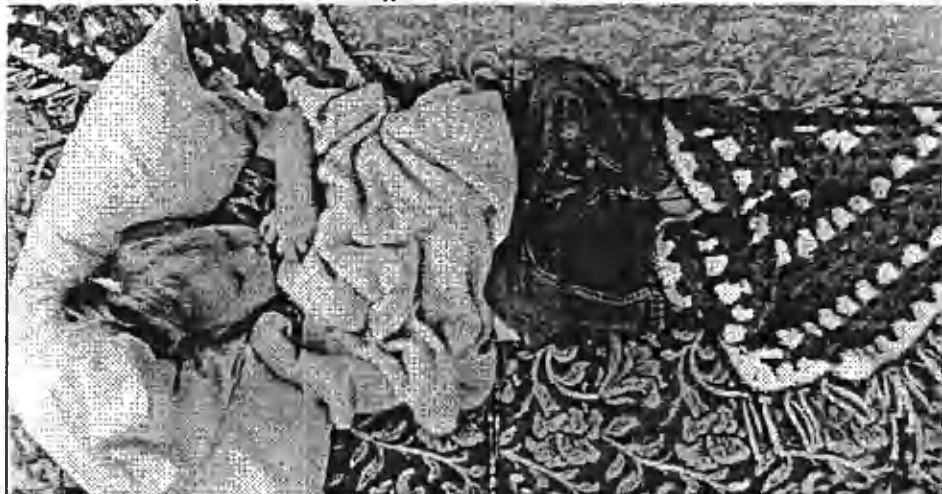


Photo by Brian Keller

While his dad helps a friend change a flat tire on Broadway, Keith Antonioli takes advantage of his freedom. First he shoots some pool at the White Front Bar. Then he helps "Cowboy" Joe Johnson blow out a match. Later in the day after finishing a bowl of ice cream at the Gallery Cafe, Keith plays under the stools while his mom Sue chats with the waitresses. His busy day finally catches up with him and Keith naps while his mother cleans windows.



Photo by Patty Reksten



Photo by Jeff Gerrish



Social life isn't a major concern for the children of P-Burg. They simply find things to do, places to go.

Photo by Brian K

Philipsburg tradition that derives from past mining days.

Other liquid traditions survive as well. Ronnie Bolstad, the wife of a miner, notes, "It seems like they [miners at Black Pine] always have a reunion down at the White Front Bar, whether the mine's opening or closing."

The town's watering holes also lean toward tradition in decor. There are no stained-glass/fern bars here, just the standard furnishings: the telltale neon beer banners in the windows, mirrored bar backdrop, pool tables, occasional pieces of arcane memorabilia (one establishment has a memorial to John Kennedy encased in glass), the come-hither flicker of electronic gambling machines, the wall-mounted oversight of elk heads.

The interior lighting, of course, is de rigueur dim, and would not quite meet Hemingway's parameters for a clean, well-lighted place. But then, who wants to imbibe under the glare of spotlights? Of these social centers, the winner in the name category (and loser in hygiene) is the Thirsty Dog, although the Hungry Buzzard (now retitled the more jangly Silver Spur) used to stand out. The White Front, Antlers and Club House round out the sites for rounds.

It's in the bars where almost a second language prevails—the knack of nicknames. Against the background of the relentless chirping and burping of poker machines, a host of male monikers is heard: Thunder, Lightning (unrelated), Popeye, Godfrey, Heinie, Bubba, Wild Meat (he's not as wild as the name would indicate), and the usual assortment of Shorty, Doc, Tiny and so on. Proper names are, it seems, kept to a minimum.

Whether drinking is a problem or simply a traditional social exercise in Philipsburg is a matter of some disagreement among residents. One lifelong resident notes he's never seen a town with as much drinking as Philipsburg, but in the next breath he adds, "It's not a

problem in Philipsburg. It's normal."

Davee McGuire, who is involved with CORE, a community intervention program which deals with you drug and alcohol problems, says, "According to most of adult population of Philipsburg, there's no problem and there are no alcoholics here, even though there are." She says, however, that she doesn't think Philipsburg's drinking is any more severe than other towns'.

Sheriff Morey A. Cragun observes that drinking in

Philipsburg is simply part of the nature of Montana. "It's as much social gathering as anything else," he says of the bar scene, noting that everything in Philipsburg the bars closes up by 8 o'clock every night.

While the barrooms may be the leading destination for entertainment and socializing, schools are second. "The school basically is the entertainment for the community," says teacher Larry Veis. The choices for somewhere to go often are "go to the game or go to the bar," Veis says.

The schools not only offer a variety of activities for people to attend, but school facilities also frequently used for community functions.

The schools' value was pointedly noticed in 1985 when high school gym and cafeteria burned down in a spectacular fire



At the nursing home there are puzzles to be put together.

Photo by Michelle Pollard

For two years, until a new gym was finished, school teams played home contests in either Anaconda or Drummond.

Activities ranging from Boy Scout meetings to aerobic classes suddenly were without facilities. Organizers turned to church community rooms or the bank basement as alternatives. "We were real pinched for space for groups that sponsored suppers or meetings," school superintendent Ed Longin says.

"After the gym burned, the town realized how much a focal point it was," says Mike McCann, school board member.

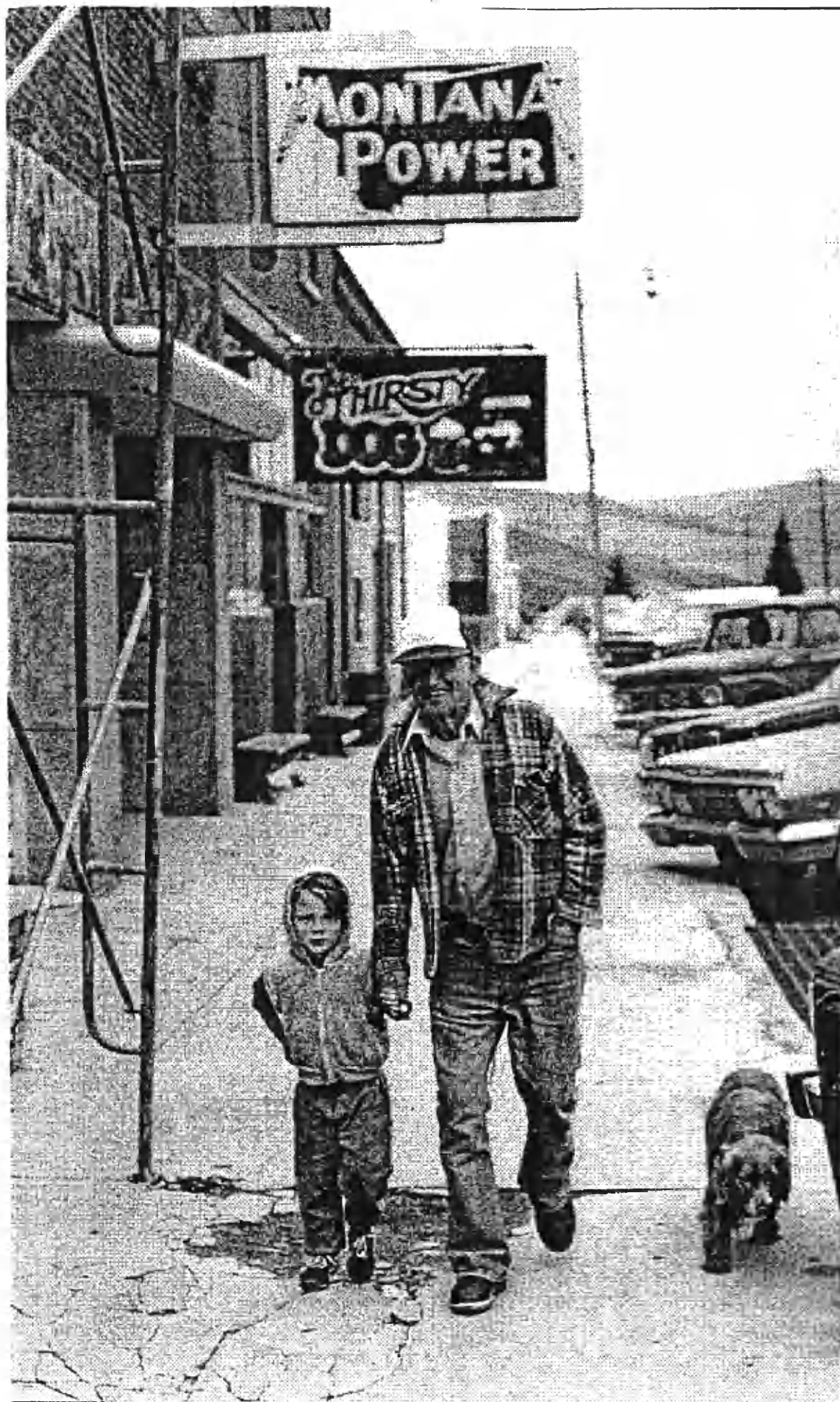


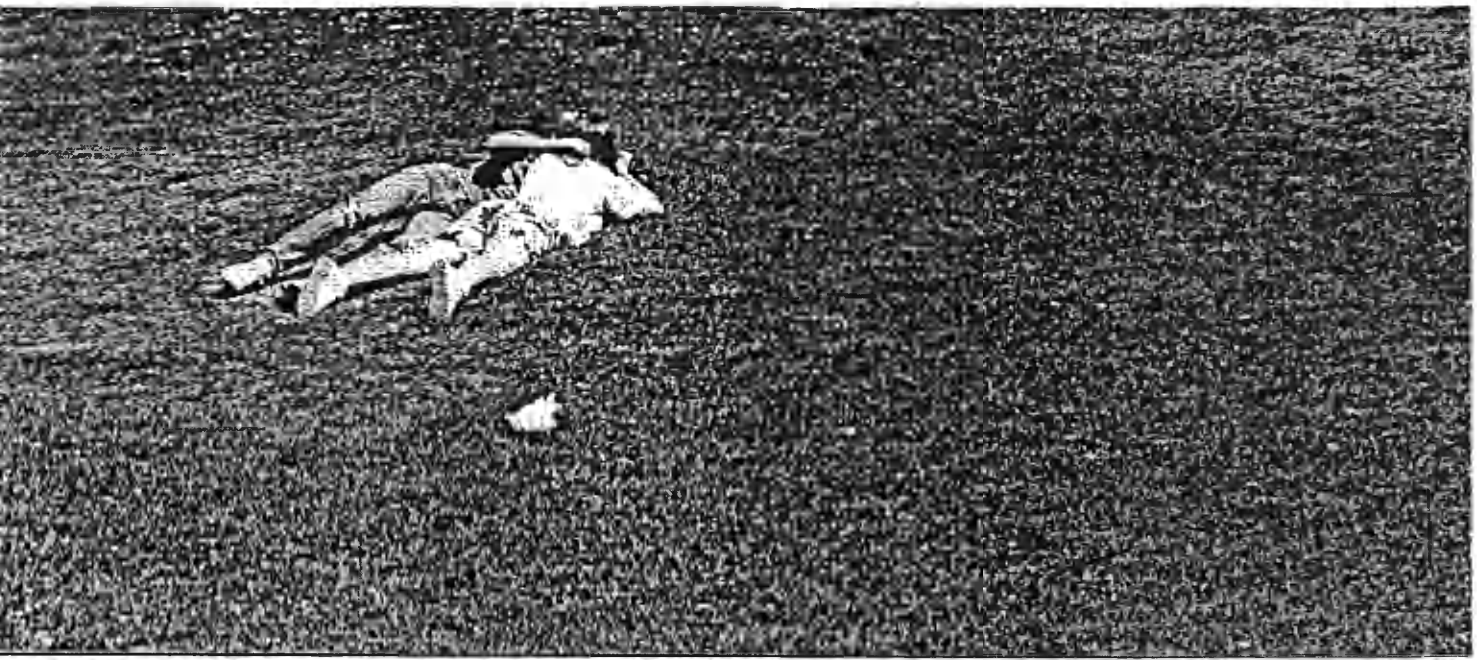
When disaster strikes P-Burg residents are quick to respond. An early morning fire at the Joan "Cookie" Morrison residence brought volunteer fireman from throughout the town. Friend and neighbor Florence McCale comforts Cookie while fireman try to stop the blaze. At left, Dennis House, fire chief talks with Cookie as the smoke inundates the neighborhood. Mrs. Morrison, who did not have insurance and whose husband had died of cancer six months before, said, "Why is my life like this?"

Photos by Jeff Smith

Social life is often a family affair. Here Grandpa takes his grandson and dog for a walk on Philipsburg's main street.

*Photo by
Greg Van Tighem*





Pool functions are well attended by town residents. Here a teen couple enjoy a little space and solitude.

Photo by Todd Goodrich



Photo by Sheila Melvin



Photo by Wendy Norgaard

*F*fth grade students try to quell preconcert jitters before a performance. Clarice McDonald is an active member of the Senior Citizens Center. The center's activities help the older members of the town to stay active and get out of their houses.

Philipsburg's social life also involves a host of service and community organizations. Business alliances such as the chamber of commerce, service groups such as Rotary or Lions Club and fraternal organizations such as the Elks provide opportunities for social interaction. The Christian Women's Club, which meets monthly, follows a simple rule: participants agree not to talk about religion, politics or religion. The senior citizens' center on a corner of Broadway is host to a busy schedule of activities for the town's elderly. And the various churches each have their own service and social groups and gatherings.

Sports also serve a social role in Philipsburg, with intramural basketball and summer softball topping the list. The town's pool league that competes in the winter, moving from bar to bar, is "one of the winter anti-dressants," according to the Rev. Derf Bergman, a member of the pool troupe. The Philipsburg Public Library—4,000 books in all—

offers another social service for the town. The library, open nine hours a week, has a good following of readers, almost entirely adults, according to librarian Beverly McDougal. The library produced a community cookbook, "Philipsburg Prospects Its Pantry" in 1987 which sold almost 900 copies in four months.

The 120-page cookbook details local culinary favorites ranging from wild-game jerky to Chinese dishes. Some recipes sport creative titles such as "Hell of a Mess Casserole" or "Impossible Cheese Burger Pie."

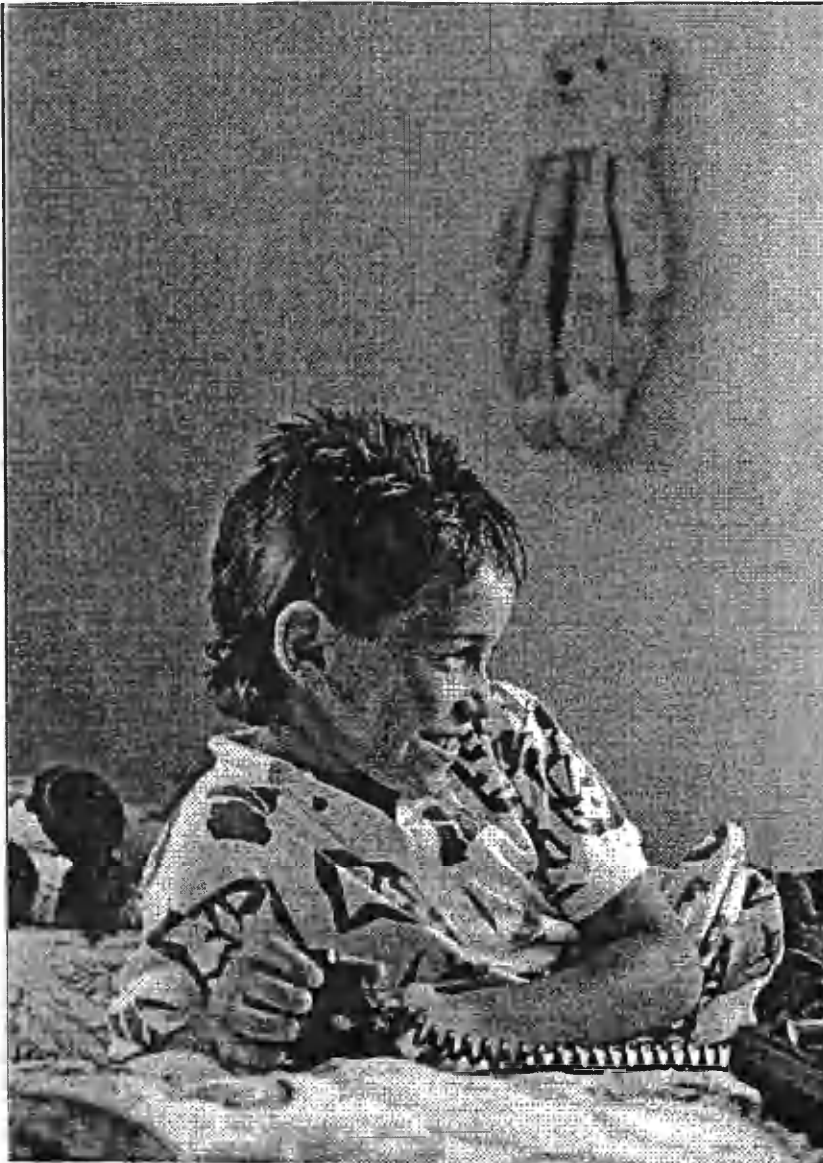
Interspersed with the food fare are geographic and historical trivia questions about the town. Sample: "In 1873, how many men, women and children were in Philipsburg? Answer: 600 men, four women and four school-age children."

The cookbook, a source of pride for the town, also highlights the artistic talents of an array of artists whose efforts grace divider pages in the book.

Photo by Jim Davidson

Kris Morrison uses his free evening hours to play his video games. Below several Philipsburg boys take advantage of the grass and the hills around the town as they play a new version of "king of the hill."

Photo by Michelle Pe



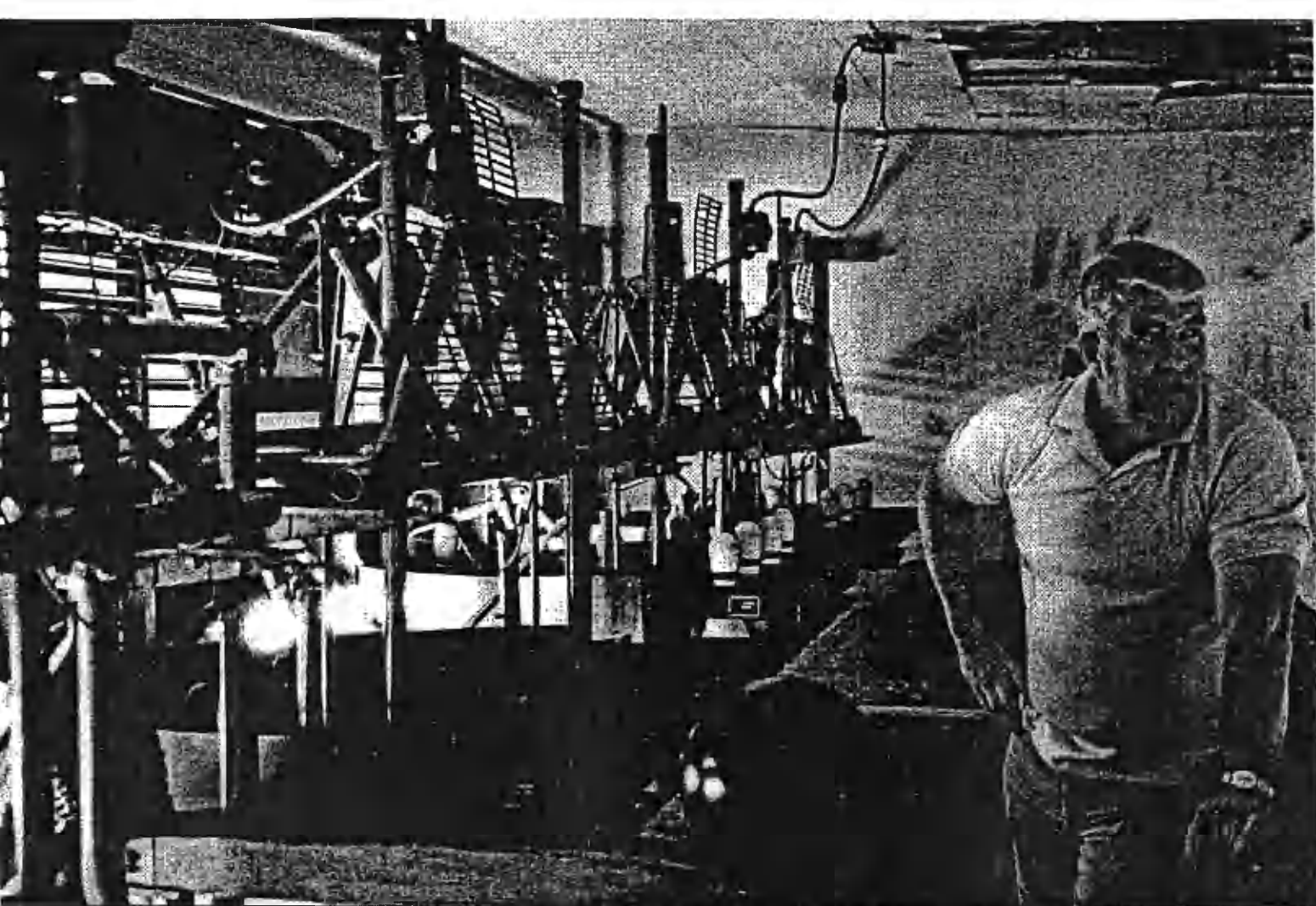
This car seems to fit in historic Philipsburg. Kirk McKay and friend work on getting the vintage auto in mint condition for selling.

Photo by Karen Nichols

The town's sites for socializing dwindled over the years. The movie theater, which opened only briefly in the summer of 1987, did not screen any films in 1988. It was reopened for the summer of 1989. The town's four-lane bowling alley, which still had hand-set pins, shut down. Residents must travel to Anaconda or beyond to bowl.

Social prospects for young adults aren't always promising. Jim Waldborn, 26, says, "You've got to travel" to find women. "I've always said this would be a nice place to put a monastery."

Travel to the bright lights, shopping malls and sporting events of the big cities—particularly Butte or Missoula—is one social outlet. "If having a couple or two is one of the favorite pastimes, one of the next favorite is getting out of town," says Mike Kahoe, "so you go to Butte or Missoula or Anaconda."



Butler's Bar and Restaurant owner Dave McRae . McRae died in 1989. He also owned the now defunct bowling alley. The bowling alley closed in 1985 and with it went jobs for teens who would work as pin setters.

Photo by Todd Goodrich



Photo by Karen Nichols

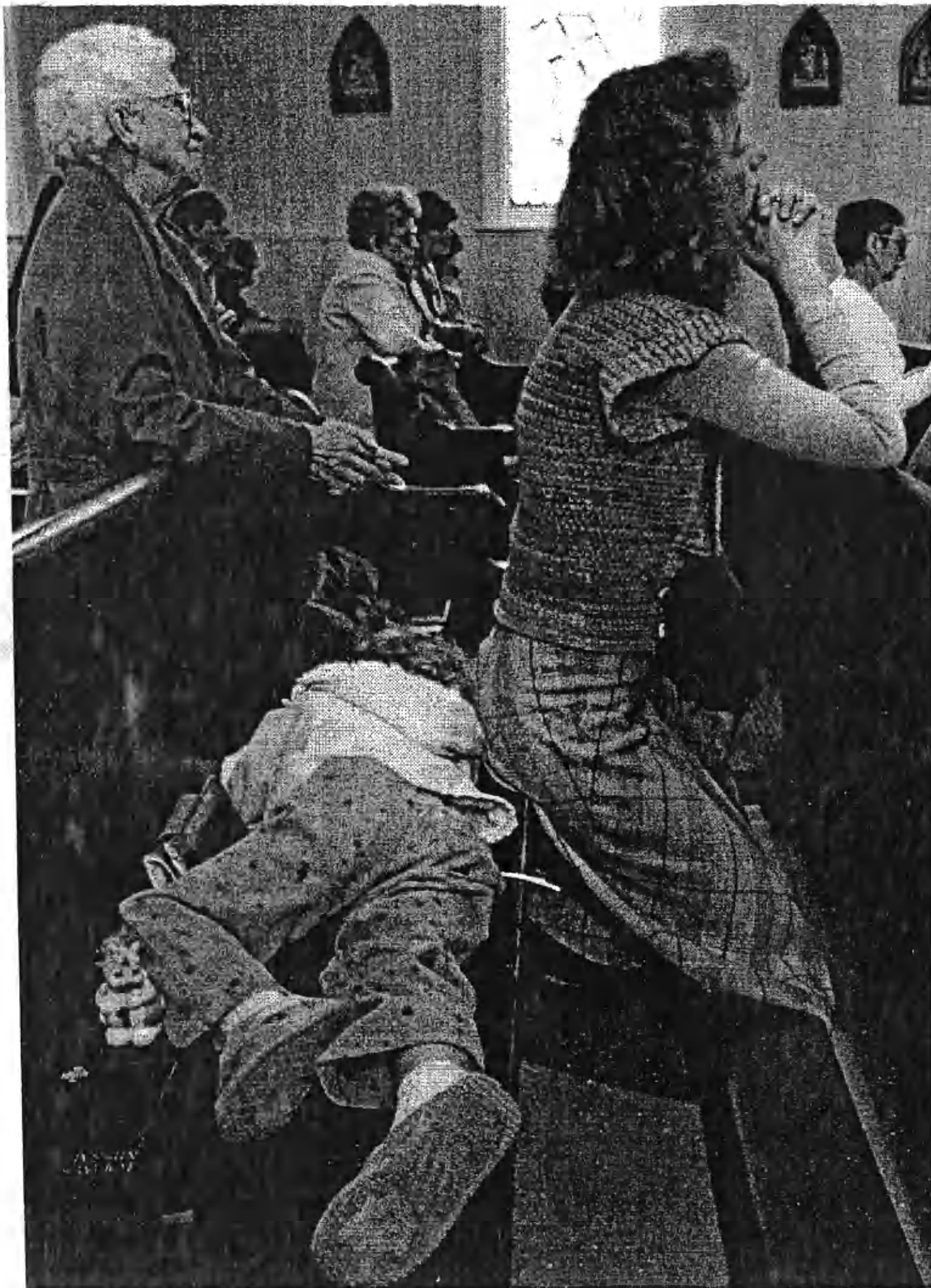


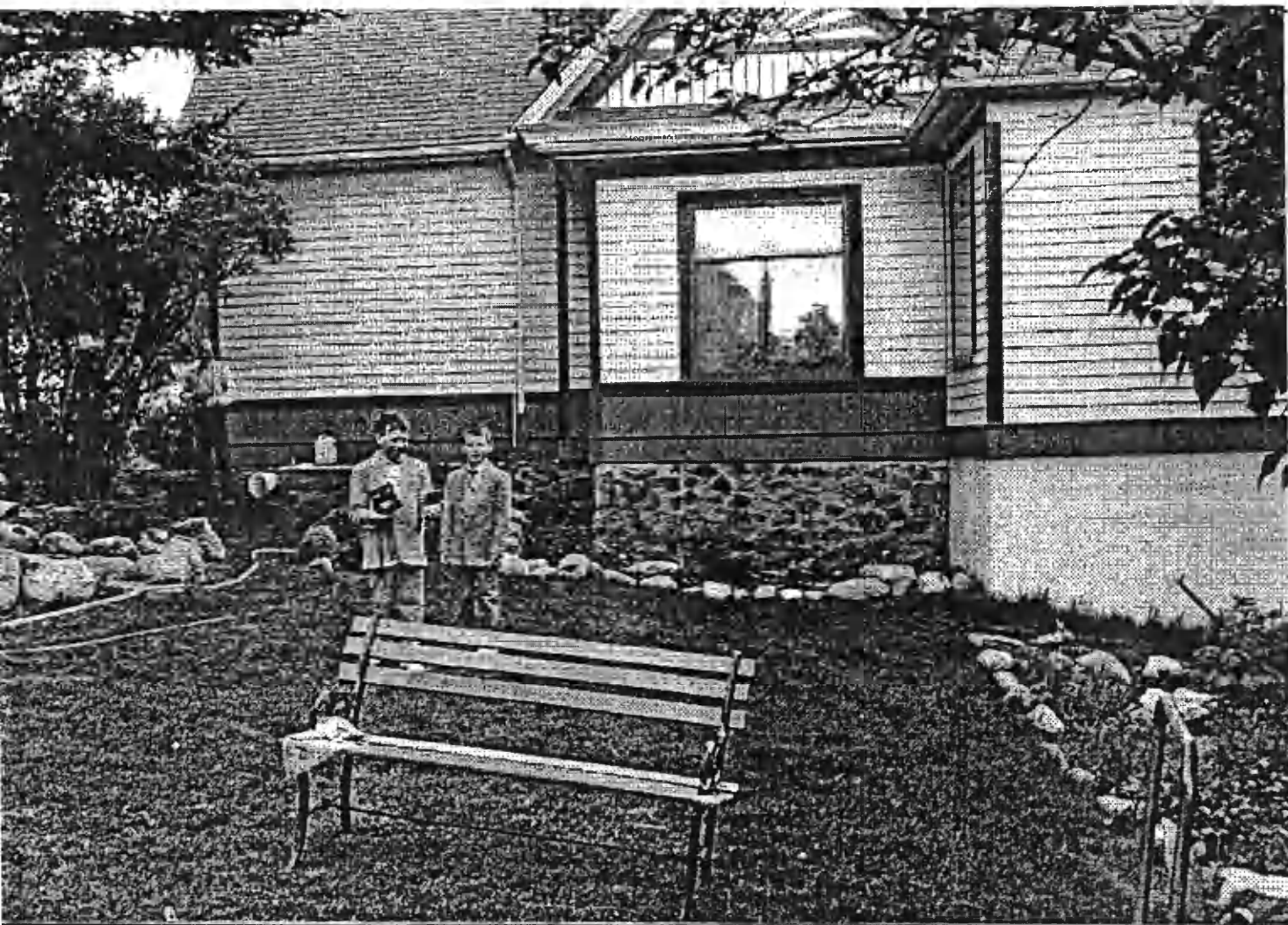
Photo by Patty Reksten



Photos by Jeff Gerrish

Life in Philipsburg can be the same simple pleasures as in any other town. A game of ambush on the floor, a quiet moment with your child or your friend. As residents are quick to say, it's the simple things in life that are important.





Ryan and Matthew Baldwin before their first communion.

Photo by Claire Hendrickson

FAITH Chapter Five

The quartet of steeples that rose in a surge of spiritual instruction almost 100 years ago still stands tall on the skyline of Philipsburg. The town's original four churches are arranged along the main street ("church row" to some) on the northern hill of Philipsburg. Today three remain houses of worship; the fourth, largely unused except as a pastor's office, is for sale. This trio of active churches—Episcopal, Catholic and United Presbyterian—has been joined over the years by others: Baptist, Mormon, Pentecostal and Community. Philipsburg residents point proudly to the fact that they have as many churches as bars. In fact, religion leads by a wide margin on this score. Whether attendance is greater in the churches or on the barstools, however, is not quite so clear-cut for comparison. Philipsburg does manifest a geographic separation of church and watering hole, with the secular establishments all on the south side of Broadway and the spiritual ones on the north side.

The townspeople's attitudes about religion range from devotion to indifference and from tolerance to apathy. One pastor estimates about one fourth—a normal fraction for a small town—of the population goes to church regularly.

For some, religious involvement is critical. Debbie and Sonney White's devotion to Flint Creek Baptist Church is a primary factor that keeps their family in Philipsburg. At another congregation, Joe and Agnes Strejkal have long been deeply involved with St. Philip's Catholic Church.

Mabel Beattie took her faith afar. A member of the Mormon Church in Philipsburg, Beattie went on an 18-month church mission—when she was 79 years old. She spent 65 hours a week proselytizing on the streets of Salt Lake City, and was so enthused by the experience she extended her mission four months.

Congregations wax and wane in Philipsburg. When the Rev. Roger Foust came to the town 15 years ago to re-start the Baptist church, it had one member. The church grew



Photo by Karen Nichols



Photo by Roger A

Church time in P-Burg is a family and friend affair. Jason White naps on father Sonney's lap while Anna Morrison, 84, shares her hymnal with Collette Currie during Sunday morning services at the Flint Creek Baptist Church. At right, Derf Bergman, pastor of the Presbyterian Church talks with his parishioners after a service.



Photo by Wendy Norg

steadily to around 30 members until loss of jobs forced some families to move away in 1988.

A relative newcomer, pastor Derf Bergman (who has a Presbyterian ministry in Philipsburg but oversees Methodist churches in nearby Hall and Drummond) has pushed attendance at services upward at St. Paul's United Presbyterian Church.

Phyllis Patten, the oldest member of the Presbyterian Church, notes that "The churches aren't as strong as they used to be."

Foust, the most veteran religious leader in Philipsburg, says the town is not overly religious, although he terms it a "good, decent community." He said most people profess to a religious affiliation even if they don't attend church, and there are good people who are not religious.

He finds increased reliance on religion—to a point—during tough economic times. "I get called into situation where people want counsel, want to talk, but they're not committed to going to church."

Foust notes one obstacle to attending his church could be its location. "This building was not built for church purposes," he says, relating that the 1876 building on the town's main street has served as an assay office, harness shop and newspaper office in the past.

The various churches tend to take separate paths and cooperation across religious boundaries is rare. Philipsburg is no stranger to church schisms, with the Presbyterian church twice having split up, with each separation spawning a separate church. Bergman notes memories of the division are still strong 28 years later.



Gayne Gursky and Barbara Hartman during an evening service at the Jesus Name Pentacostal Church.

Photo by Wendy Norgaard.

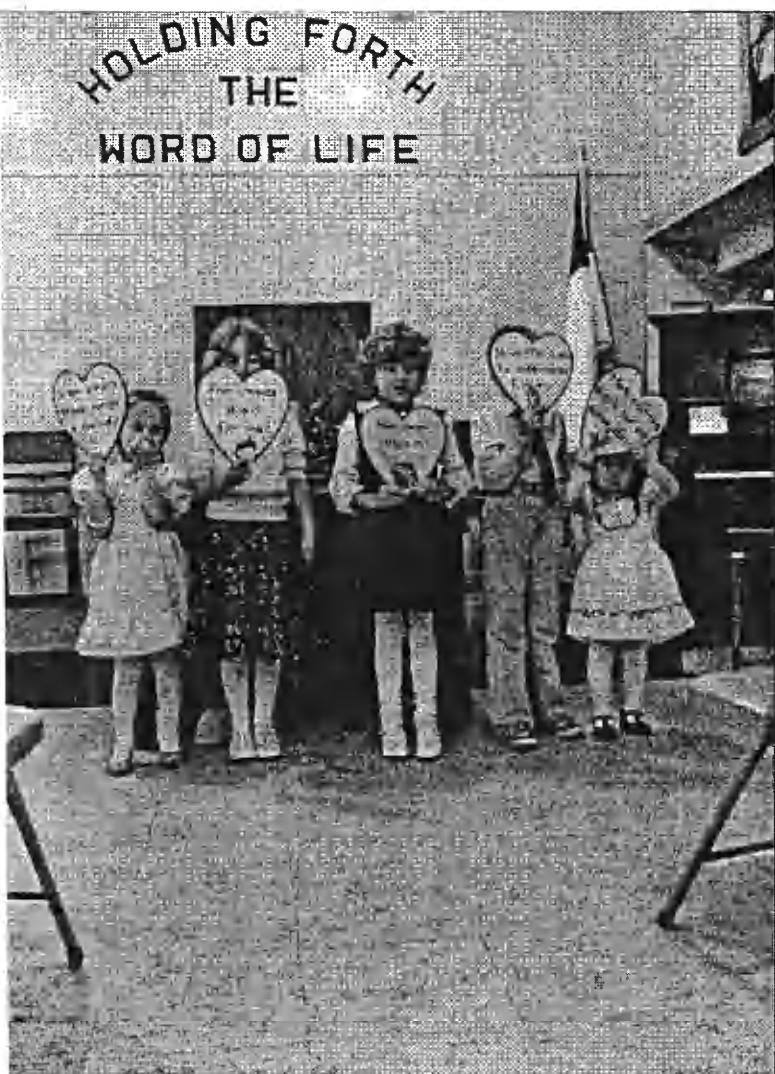


Photo by Karen Nichols

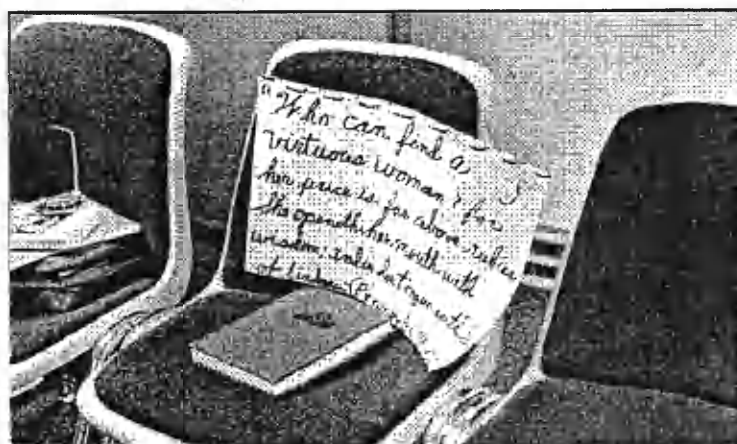


Photo by Sheila Melvin

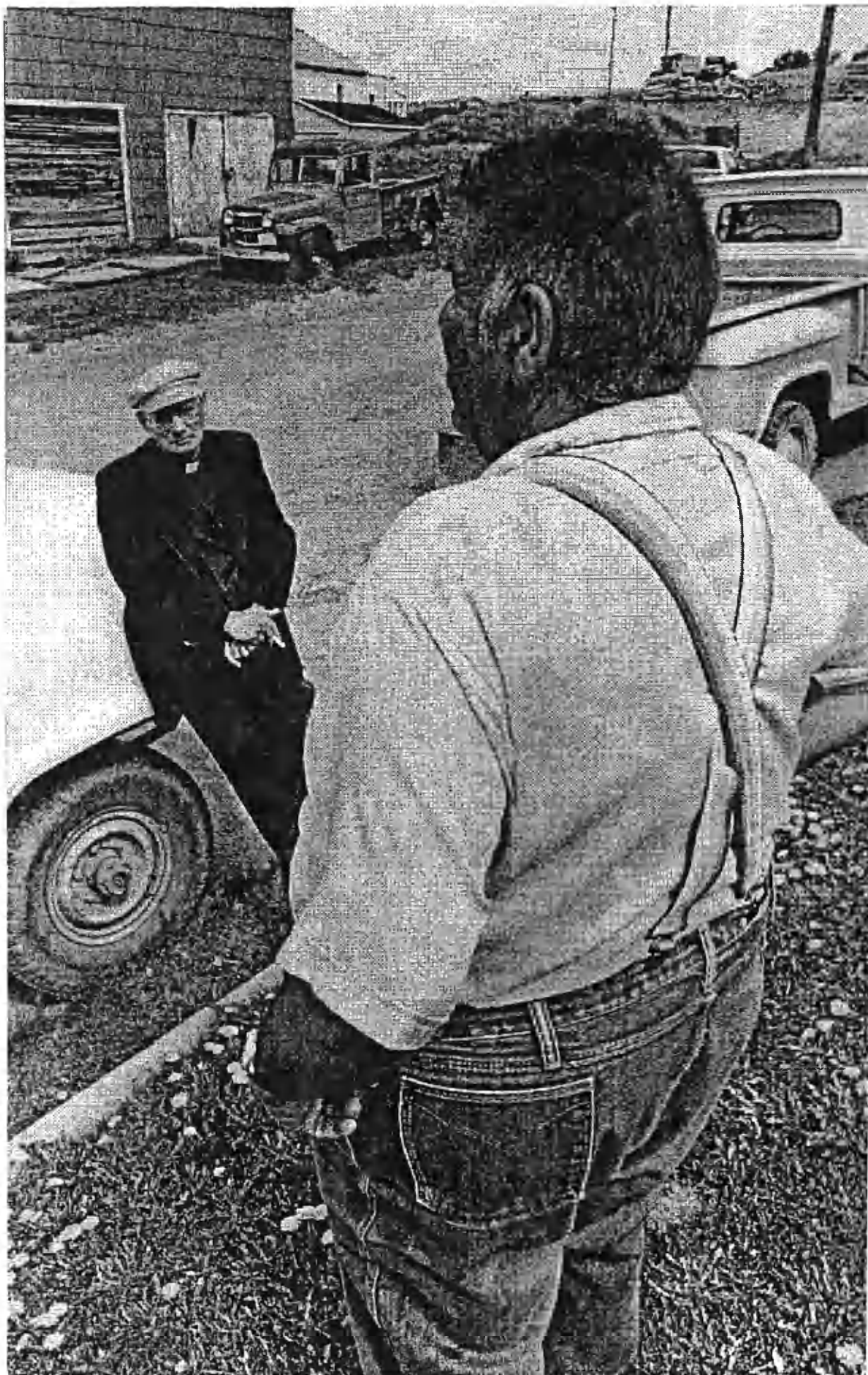


Photo by Jim Davidson

Sign at a women's meeting at the Latter Day Saints Church in Philipsburg. At left, kids hold the words of the Lord at the Flint Creek Baptist Church.

*F*ather M. M. Beatty visits with Walter "Tiny" Johnson, Jr. As a parish priest in a small town, Beatty made daily rounds even after he had one foot amputated.

*Photos by
Brian Keller*





Rev. Malacha Beatty made daily trips to the nursing home to deliver communion to sick parishioners. He didn't worry about people sleeping through his sermons because he has a loud, booming voice.

Parish Priest retires, returns to Anaconda

Engaged in serious conversation on a wireless telephone, the Rev. Malacha Beatty doesn't give in when it's a matter of religion.

Beatty, pastor of St. Philip's Catholic Church, is resolute as he speaks to one of his parishioners who is leaving town for a few days. "Get to Mass down there. Don't come up with the idea you can't find it (church)," Beatty says. As he closes the conversation, the veteran priest notes, "Have fun and get to church."

That could well stand as a sort of slogan for the bald, bespectacled Beatty, whose sometimes stern facade when he's talking religion is likely to break into his wide grin during a lighter moment.

Beatty, who turned 65 in September of 1989, has led the faithful of Philipsburg's Catholic congregation for more than 11 years. He returned to Anaconda in September because of health problems. And although he says he's retiring, he also has plans to "help out" those who need it. An Irishman from "just over the hill" (Anaconda), Beatty has a quick, self-deprecating sense of humor and a hearty laugh, and visitors are always welcome at his rectory. But when it comes to the church and religion, Beatty brooks no nonsense.

Citing one of his church members who is pregnant, Beatty points out she hasn't been coming to Mass. "I suppose she'll be coming around for a Baptism soon.



"They're liable to run me out of town when I won't baptize their baby."

One of his former parishioners, Ronnie Bolstad, sums up his directness: "He doesn't pull any punches." The pastor, though, is well appreciated by his Philipsburg flock, and his absence was felt for several months in 1987 when he was gone with health problems as it is now. Beatty suffered five aneurysms and had one foot amputated, but recovered and returned to the Philipsburg pulpit in December 1987.

He maneuvered on an artificial foot, which slowed him down on his rounds. "I get around as much as before—maybe a little slower—but I get there," Beatty says. "I think I could go anywhere, and I still do." Beatty adds that he is thankful to be able to get around.

Beatty recounts that he sometimes has lay people deliver Communion to sick parishioners, "but some people don't like that, especially the old died-in-the-woolers. So I get in my little, old, merry Oldsmobile, and take my crutches, and I head out. Every Friday I bring Communion around to the sick." This changed when Beatty retired.

He also went to the nursing home on Fridays, and had been working to get Mass scheduled there.

He didn't worry much about somnolence during his sermons, in part because of the volume of his voice. He didn't use a microphone or sound system, except at

outdoor summer services at nearby Georgetown Lake. Even when he says Mass in Anaconda, he pushed the microphone away. "I don't need it. Thank you, Lord, I can up and down the volume myself," he says with a laugh.

He is quick to note, however, that his vocal skills don't extend to singing. "Singing is not my cup of tea," he says. "At church here, I warned them right off the bat that I would intone the introduction to the 'Our Father,' and if one of them didn't take off singing, then I would, and they sure did."

Beatty offered Mass every day of the week in Philipsburg—weekdays in his living room and Sunday services in the Philipsburg church proper as well as at Georgetown Lake.

The pastor has one regular patron at religious services and everywhere else he goes: his 13-year-old German shepherd, Nibby. "She goes to Mass in Philipsburg every day but Sunday," Beatty says, and notes that at summer services at the lake the dog attended Sunday Mass.

The pastor's summer sojourns to Georgetown Lake, a popular vacation area 10 miles south of town, were among his favorite pastimes, although he deeply enjoyed his work and the people in Philipsburg.

He takes in stride the economic changes that affect his parishioners, recalling that no sooner had he arrived in Philipsburg than the mill closed down. "Then since I've been here, this Black Pine mine is up and down, and everything else is up and down, so there are the usual small-town problems with people," Beatty says.

Tough times have been the norm for the town, Beatty says, so people have learned to take them for granted, and he, too, tries not to worry unnecessarily.

His former congregation of about 80 families at St. Philip's remains fairly stable. "Very few Catholics bounce in and out of town," Beatty says.

Beatty points proudly to the increased cohesiveness of his congregation resulting from the new parish hall built at St. Philip's. "In a small town, you have these little groups who do things together and function together and get things going. Since we got our hall, there's more chance for activity than there was before."

The parish hall—two floors' worth—is the site for a wide range of activities, including youth religious-education classes, anniversary celebrations, funeral dinners and church bazaars.

Beatty would liked to have offerd more activities for the youth in his parish, but school and related activities in a small town already occupy much of the children's and parents' time. With some resignation, Beatty says, "You can't work a horse to death."

He cites one conflict on a weekend when the state Catholic youth convention is being held in Helena but the state basketball tournament was in Billings, so none of Beatty's youths were going to the convention.



Father Beatty and Ronald Ochs pause to chat.

Photo by Brian F

"I always laugh, because my God, as far as anything goes, comes in fifth, after four or five other things, and some people are trying to shove my God into sixth place and I'm trying to hold him in fifth."

Beatty's unexpected retirement (He hoped to continue parish priest until he was 70.) poses problems. A replacement priest based in Philipsburg is not assured.

"The Bishop is hoping," says Rev. Beatty, "but there aren't as many of us as there used to be."

If a priest is not assigned to Philipsburg, the town parishioners will have to rely on visits by a priest from a larger town, possibly Anaconda, which is about 30 miles away. They are upset about that possibility, because a visiting priest would not be the same.

Although Beatty is removing himself physically from the town, he remains spiritually tied.

"This is my territory now, I would never leave around here."



Mel Wattula deep in the Black Pine Mine.

Photo by Charlie Eliassen

MAKING A LIVING

Chapter Six

In May 1987, spirits are high in Philipsburg as the Black Pine Mining Co. reopens its mine west of town. Some jobs are involved, including those for miners at the site, truckers to haul the ore and workers at the processing mill. For Larry Bolstad, Black Pine's rebirth—after an eight-month closure—means the chance to return to P-burg with his family. They had lived in Troy, where he'd gone to a mining job after Black Pine closed. Now the mine and the Bolstad family are back.

"I was raised mining and that's all I've ever done," says Larry, who has been a miner for 20 years. "As soon as a mining company shuts down, I go right to another one." That means a somewhat itinerant lifestyle, but the Bolstads—Larry, his wife, Ronnie, and then a 3-year-old son—settled down in Philipsburg in 1981 and left only for a short stay in Troy.

Mel Wattula also heads back to work with Black Pine's rebirth, taking a job as a surveyor and moving back to Philipsburg from Billings. His wife, Sandy, returns to a

'I was raised mining and that's all I've ever done. As soon as a mining company shuts down, I go find another one.'

Larry Bolstad

teaching job at the high school.

Prospects appear bright for Philipsburg. The price of silver is over \$8 an ounce, the county's largest employer is mining again, and optimism flourishes.

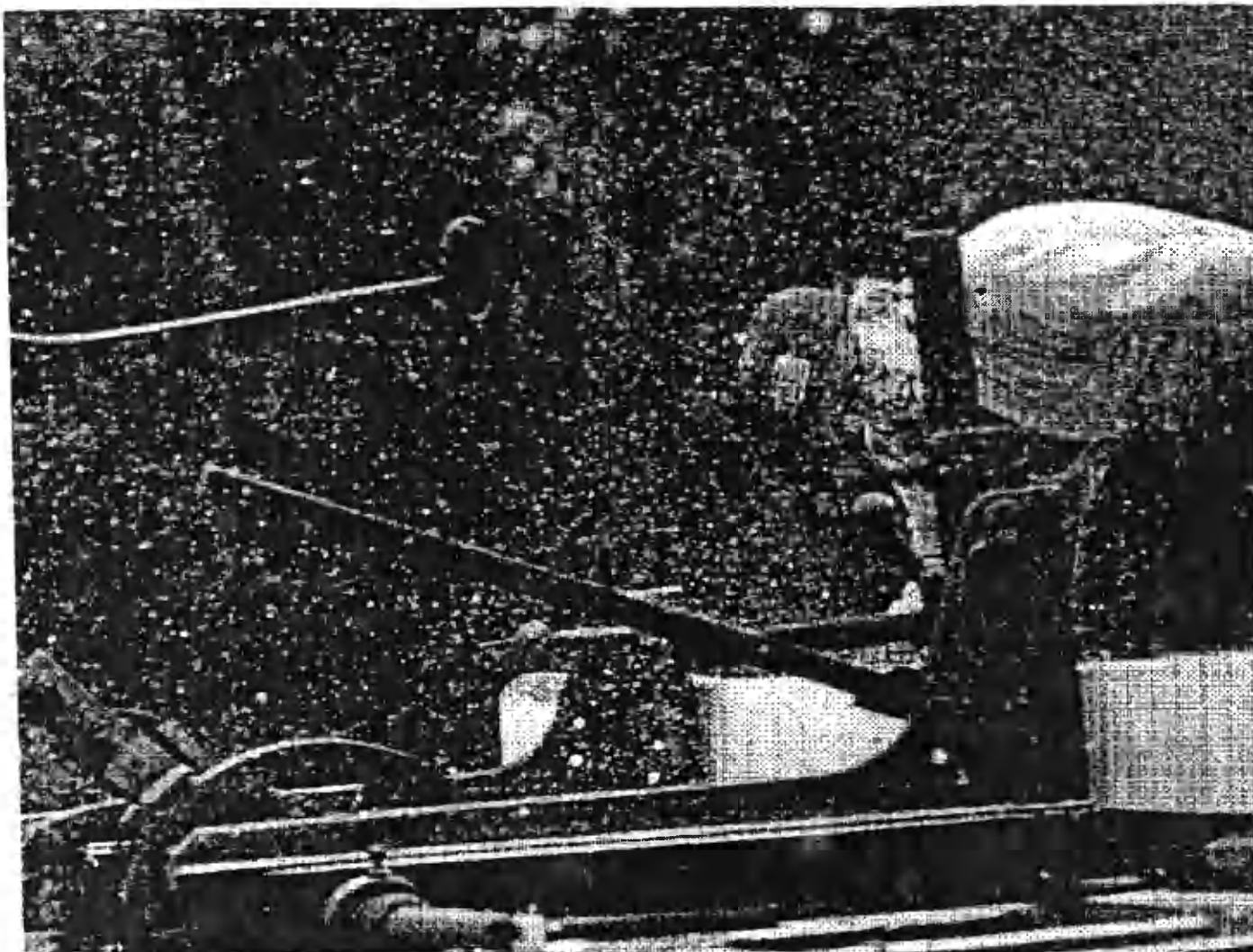
It doesn't last long.

By late February 1988, the price of silver has dropped \$2 and the doors of Black Pine swing shut again. The announcement comes on a Wednesday, and the following Monday miners are out of work.

The latest closure is greeted with an air of resignation. Most residents thought it was coming, and the town is used to the vagaries of the mining industry. After all, Philipsburg has been through 120 years of similar ups and downs.

It doesn't take Bolstad long to find another job, although it's in Lewistown, 280 miles away. He and another miner, Larry Baldwin, work in Lewistown during the week and return to their families in Philipsburg on weekends.

Mel Wattula begins searching for surveying jobs outside of Philipsburg. He and his wife plan to separate for about a



Logging offers another job base, both with small local outfits and the large sawmill at Hall, north of P-Burg.



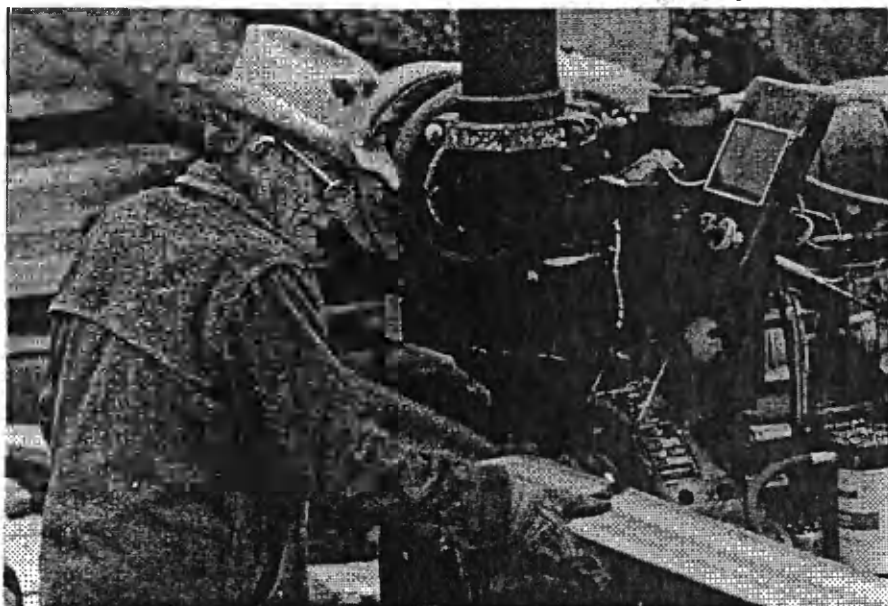
When the Black Pine Mine reopened in May 1987 there was plenty of work. After the price of silver dropped in February of 1988, the mine was closed once again.

Photo by Charlie Eliu



Jim Wallbillig, left, and Frank Wallbillig, below, start early and work late at their homemade sawmill. The logs are hauled onto their ranch and they make their own lumber. Jim, a graduate of Northern Montana College in Havre built the mill and his father, Frank, works alongside his son when county commissioner duties don't take him away. They raise cattle and grow their own hay on the property. Jim Wallbillig maintains "It's a no-win situation to have cattle and to have to buy hay for them. Hell it's a no-win situation to have cattle."

Photos by Todd Goodrich



ar, and, if he finds a good permanent
, she'll join him.

Not all those who lose their jobs will
ove. Some will, in the words of one
sinessman, "hang around here and
e on welfare and unemployment."

Such is the life of the Philipsburg
ner in the 1980s. In truth, Philipsburg
't really a mining town any more,
en though the mystique and hard-
k history prevail and the town
ntinues to think of itself as a mining
mmunity.

Black Pine isn't all there is in mining around
ilipsburg—several smaller operations are in business,
th most drilling for gold, and the solo miner still has a
ice in the area.

"Gold is where it's at now," says Bill Antonioli, manager
the mill which processes both silver and gold. But silver
ces are down below the level where the resource is
rketable.

Plenty of exploration for minerals goes on around
ilipsburg, but actual extraction is minimal compared to
e glory days of the past.

And mining is far from the only job opportunity in
ilipsburg. Often overlooked, public services contribute a
ostantial and stable job base to the town. The school

***There is much talk
about, and some
exploration for ore
near P-Burg. But
actual extraction is
minimal.***

system, county and city government, the
Forest Service district office, the hospital
and rest home, and even the state
highway maintenance crew provide
steady employment that is rarely
noticed in comparison with the
appearance and disappearance of
mining jobs.

Logging offers another job base, both
with small local outfits and the large
sawmill at Hall, north of Philipsburg.
Ranching, while it doesn't produce
bushels of jobs, is a contributor to the

economic and employment situation.

Retail and service businesses are another corner of the
town's economy, although they feel fairly direct effects of
major layoffs.

Outdoor recreation also provides jobs for outfitters and
guides for hunting and fishing or tourism-related jobs in
the summer.

Longtime County Commissioner Frank Waldbillig
says those who envision catastrophe when a mine closes
fail to consider one important factor in Philipsburg. "Social
Security and retirement checks that come into this county
every month lend to a stability people don't realize."

Economic survival in Philipsburg does rely on a certain



Adele Knudsen works hard to support her family. Above, she works at the sheriff's office, while daughter Kate, watches TV.

amount of versatility. The Gallery Cafe is also a floral shop and the town bus stop; the Philipsburg Mail office doubles as a travel agency; and hardware-store owner Rick Barkell does plumbing on the side.

Sandy Wattula says that versatility is the key to the survival of Philipsburg. "To stay here, in order to breathe this clean air and see the sights, people have had to trade generalization for specialization," she says. "They have to be jacks of all trades."

When a person in Philipsburg is asked what he or she does for a living, a common answer is, "Anything I can."

Jim Waldbillig, for instance, is working to build up his ranch stock, runs a small sawmill, and does construction work on the side.

Adele Knudsen's schedule tells a similar story. She works 40 hours a week as a dispatcher at the sheriff's office, 25 hours at her gift shop, Grandma's Parlour, and another 16 hours free-lancing commercial artwork and doing sign-painting jobs.

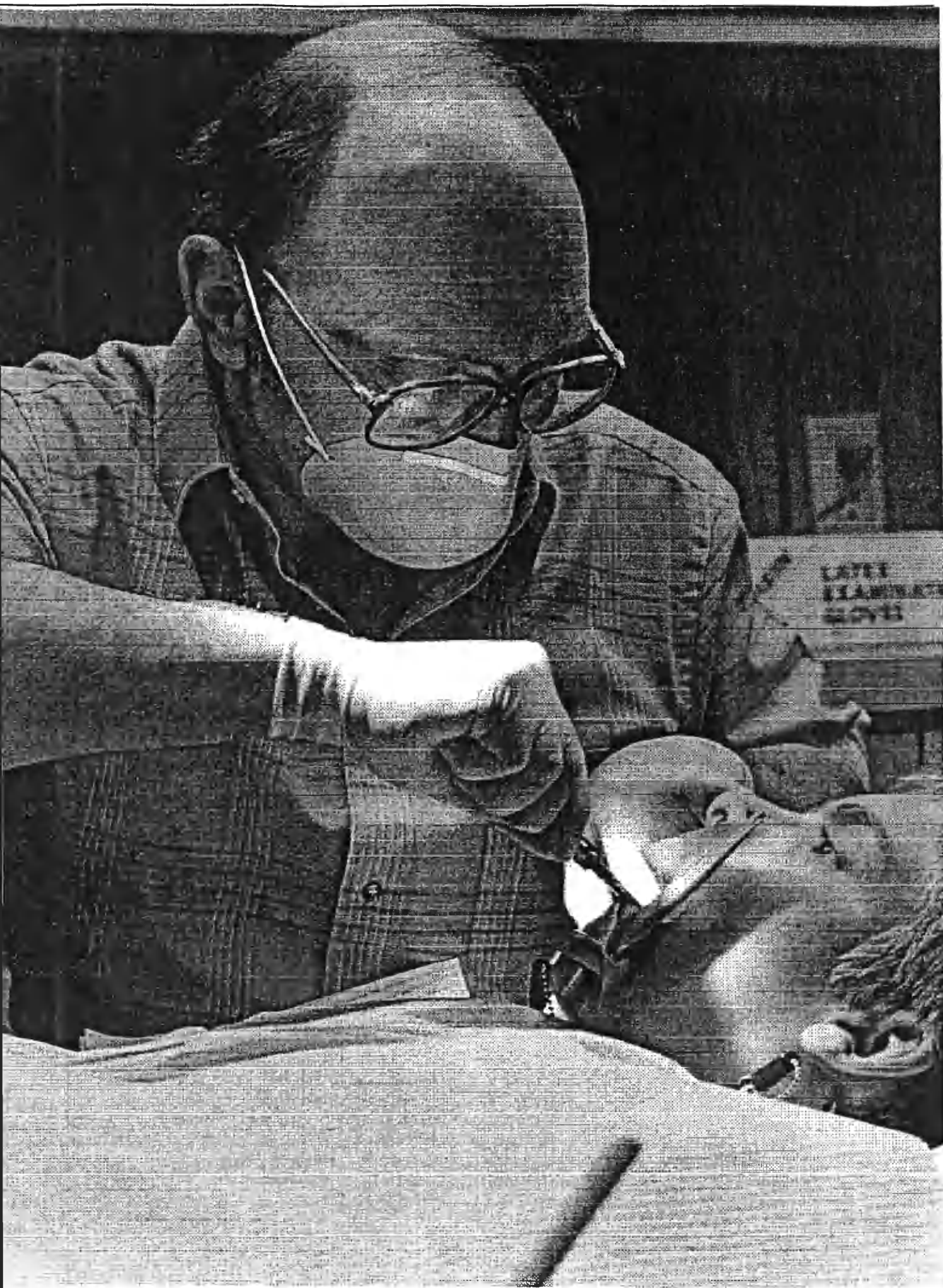
All that is undertaken in order to support her three children, but that hectic agenda doesn't leave much time to spend with them. Since she can't always go to her children, they come to her and are allowed to spend time at the sheriff's office and watch television there.

"It's hard to make it in a town like Philipsburg, but I feel fortunate that there are so many things I can do," she says.



Adele and her children, Katie, Curt and Y.A. manage to get together for a taco dinner. It's not easy being a "wondermother," Knudson says. She has even combined artwork with speech for a toastmasters presentation on the subject.

Photos by Claire Hendrickson



Dr. Robert Gross works on Ricky Johnson's teeth. Gross is also a licensed guide and takes hunters on trips into the backwoods.



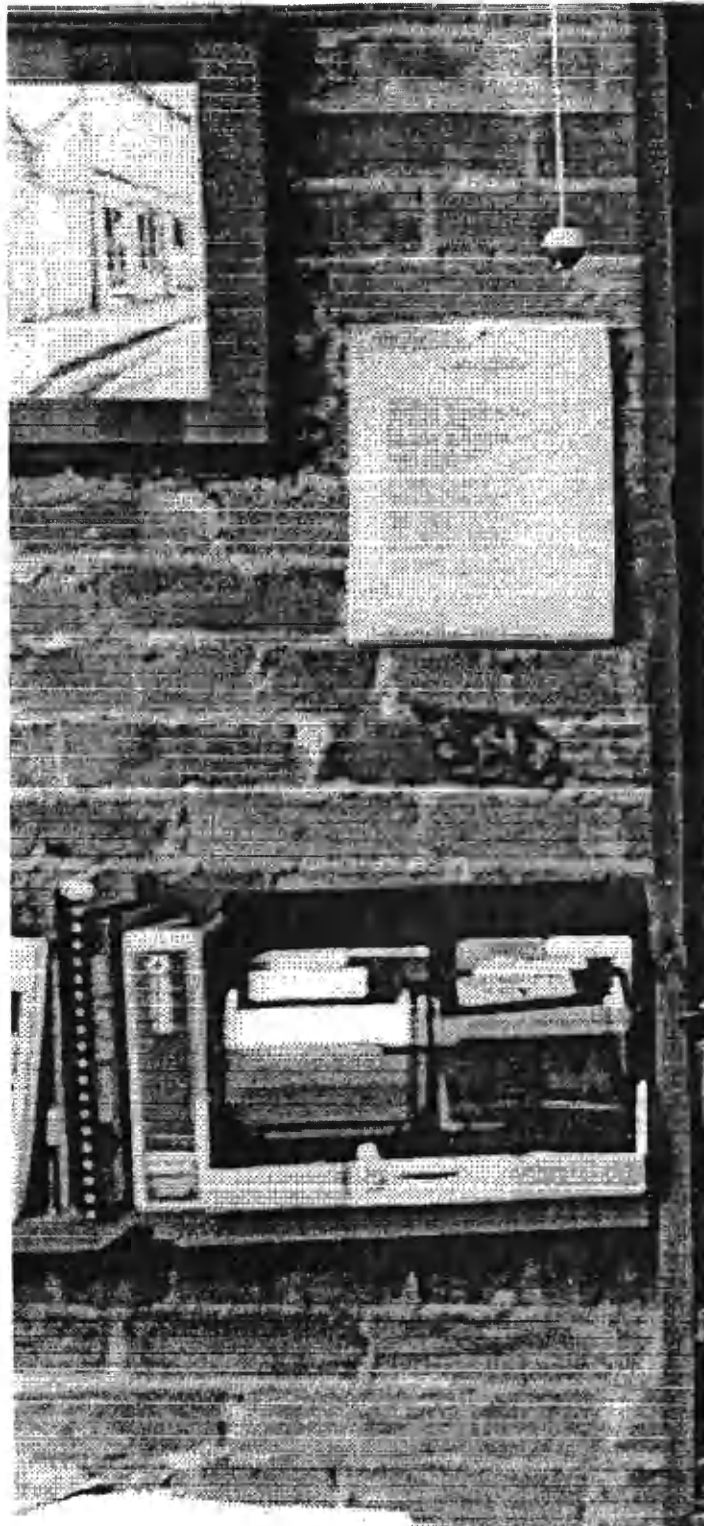
Steve Neal, above, is a Philipsburg native. He runs the camera shop, but is also known as a great gardener and is a city council member.

Photo by Todd Goodrich



Robin Morrison gives Delavera Hess a highlighting treatment. At right is Gordon Shepherd, another native who returned. He owns Automation Software Consultants, Incorporated.

Photo by Jim Davidson



atypical business for a small town. Automation Software Consultants Inc. is a computer business run by Gordon Shepherd.

His specialty is computer control hardware and software for pneumatic-tube systems for hospitals, so he doesn't have customers in Philipsburg (or Montana, for that matter). From his Philipsburg base, however, he travels across the country for clients such as the Mayo Clinic or Cedars-Sinai Hospital.

Shepherd, a Philipsburg native, returned to his home town after 25 years in California. "We just wanted to get the outdoors. There's more access here, my kid has a ho and I like to fish."

Hard work has been a cornerstone in Philipsburg. The only qualifier is there isn't quite enough opportunity for everyone to be able to work hard.

Making a living in Philipsburg can mean doing business in a wide variety of fields, from cameras to computers and from haircuts to hardware.

In a cluttered storefront on Broadway, Steve Neal runs the camera shop he's operated for seven years. His father was a chemist with an assay office in the same building, and during slow times was a photographer. Neal has lived in Philipsburg all his life and appreciates its outdoor amenities.

Across the street from the camera store is a somewhat



Photo by Roger Maier

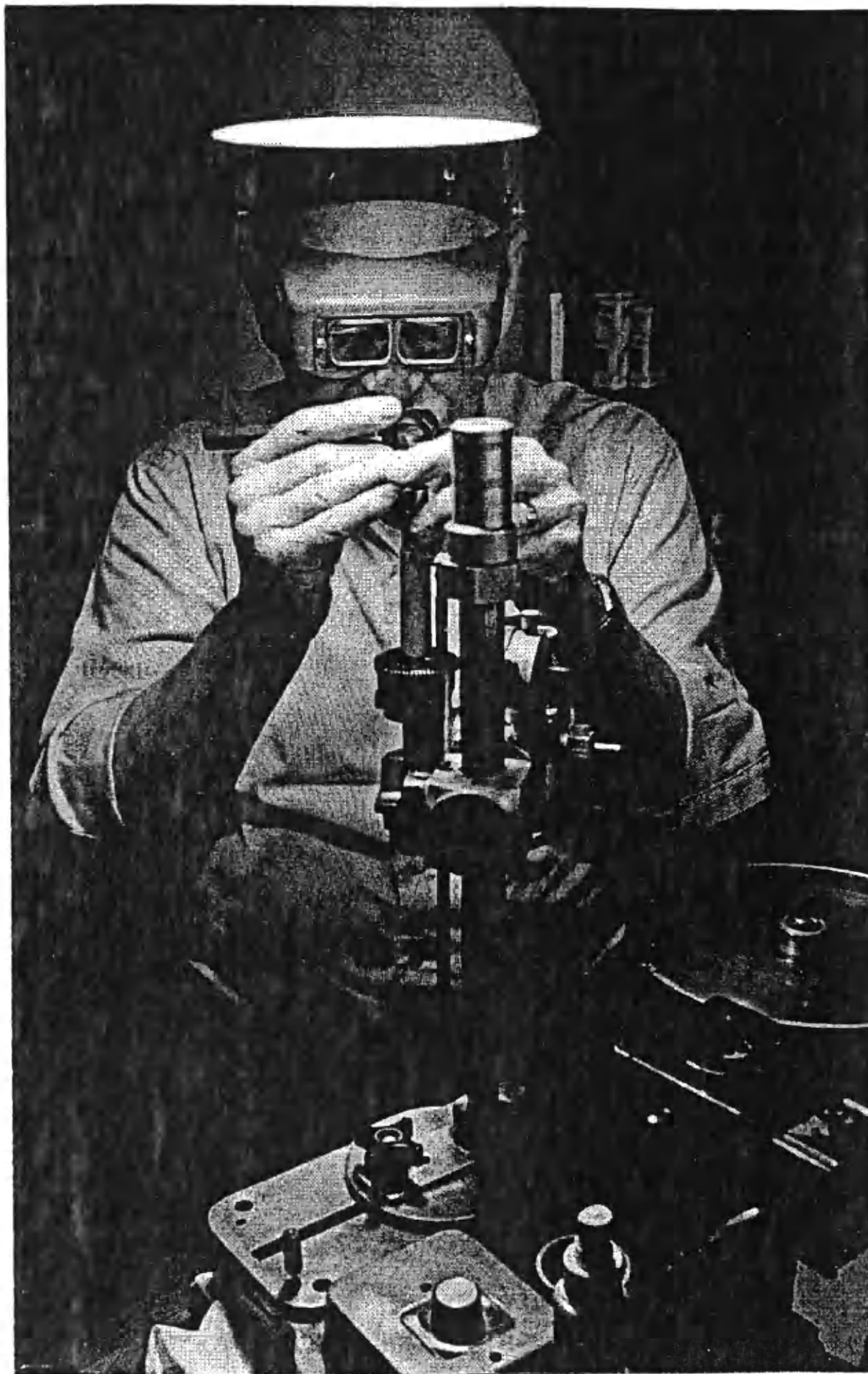
Another Philipsburg native who returned, although it is after only a four-year absence, is Doug Morrison. He and his wife run The Headquarters, the only hair-styling shop in town.

He likes Philipsburg as a place in which his children can grow up, and he scoffs at those who call teen drinking a problem. "Occasionally, kids will get into trouble drinking, but the thing is, they're doing the same thing their parents do," Morrison says.

Nancy Owens, who was the first woman on the town council and now presides as mayor, finds employment as a substitute schoolteacher and also works part time in a real-estate office.

She describes her husband LeRoy as a "jack of all trades," who is educated as a secondary schoolteacher and has been working as an electrician on a drilling project, but also has faced extended periods without work. "We just get by month to month, like a lot of people in this town," she says.

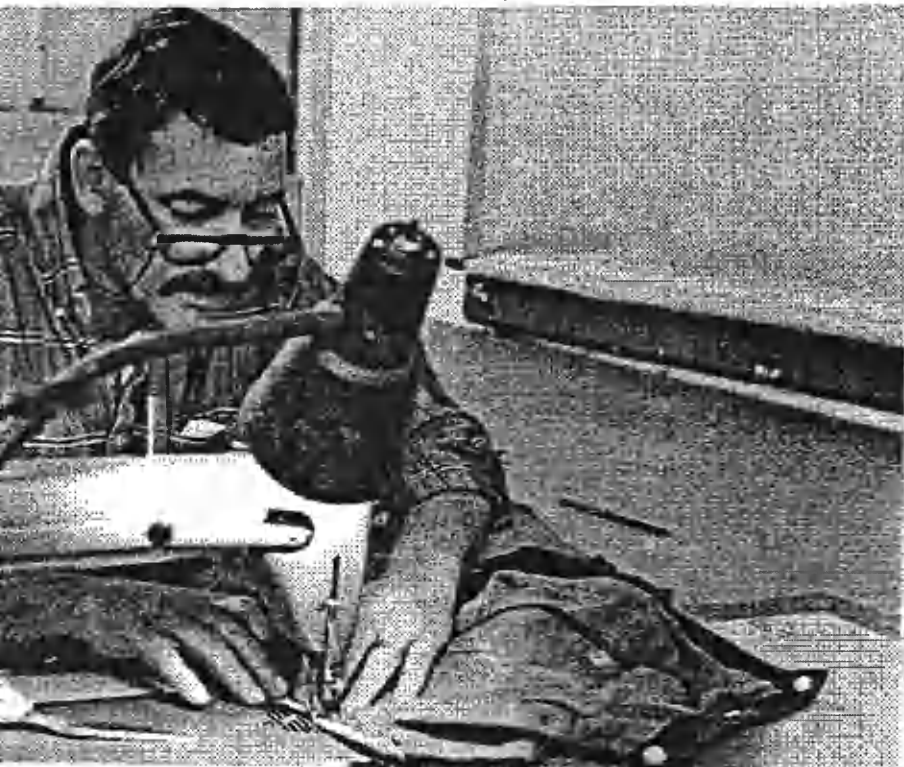
Owens had her own struggles in the political arena being accepted as a woman in leadership in a historically male-dominated town. She downplays the controversies now, but there were tense confrontations at previous meetings where, she notes, "I guess you'd say I had to prove myself." Speaking of the doubts of some people



Ward Ringer cuts synthetic sapphire in his shop on Broadway. He moved to Philipsburg, Portland seven years after his retirement. "There is no such thing as a perfect sapphire or a diamond," Ringer says.

Photo by Roger Maier

is Brown repairs a work vest for the Forest Service. Brown and his wife moved to Philipsburg from Palm Springs to "get out of the rat race." Brown runs the upholstery shop and makes vests and backpacks for photographers. Photo by Roger Maier



Deena Barkell and husband, Rick, own the Philipsburg Hardware Store. Photo by Wendy Norgaard



Photo by Michelle Pollard

At left Mary Pochelon and Blanche Peterson rest after a long shift at the Gallery Cafe. Both now have other jobs. Pochelon lives in Bigfork and Peterson is attending school in Butte. Above, town veterinarian Mark Ransford and assistant Nancy Munis patch up a resident dog.

Photo by Patty Reksten

out women and politics, she says, "I don't think that will ever fade away."

She is more concerned currently with the town's water predicament: state tests revealed giardia in the Philipsburg water. Although no illnesses have been documented, the town has been ordered to treat its water, a mandate that would cost over a million dollars.

One veteran of school board duty is Zane Murfitt, who spent 14 years on the board and was town mayor for over a decade. The president of Flint Creek Valley Bank, Murfitt is distinguished by his trademark cigars.

Behind the veil of cigar smoke lies an optimist who in his 27 years in Philipsburg has seen constant ups and

downs. "When I first came here, there was a big sawmill being built, and the mines were going really good," Murfitt recalls. "Then the mine closed down, and the sawmill took up the slack. Then another sawmill opened up and the phosphate mine opened up and created jobs. The sawmill closed and the phosphate mine closed and made it tough for a few years."

From a banker's perspective, down times economically can be difficult, Murfitt says. "You try to work things out." He notes, however, that it's important to keep personal feelings aside as much as possible. "Just because they're your friends doesn't mean you make a bad business decision." shortage of chaperons. "For the most part, it's



Chrissy Reed and Rachel Vickery hang clothes and have some fun doing so.

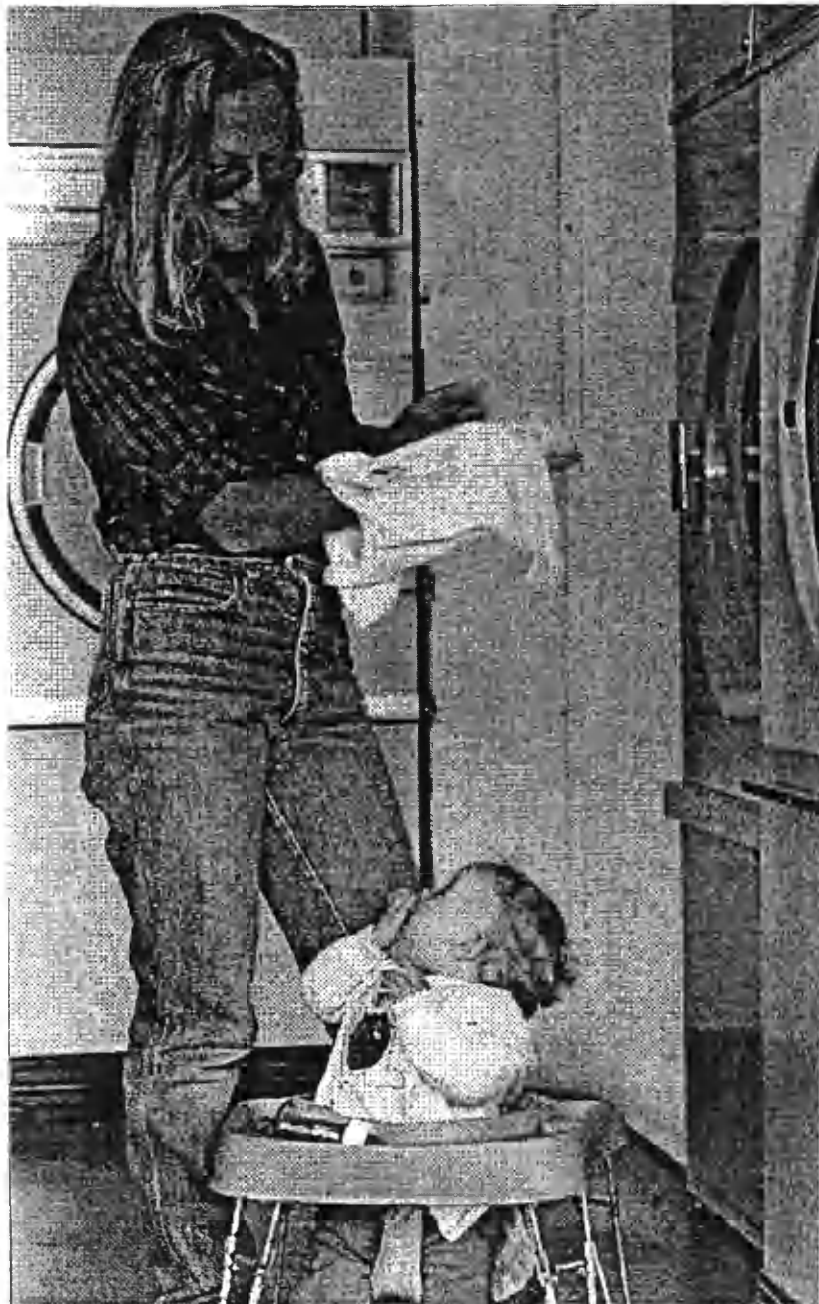
Photo by Jim Davis



Photo by Brian Keller

There is much work to be done keeping a household running and most of that burden still falls on the women of P-Burg. Above Sue Antonioli works on her windows. Diana Robson gets some advice from daughter Kari Sue, as she does the laundry. Her husband was one of the electricians who worked on the new high school gymnasium.

Photo by Roger Maier





ie nursing home in Philipsburg provides jobs for nurses, kitchen workers and therapists.

Photo by Michelle Pollard



A calf escapes from the chute and is quickly caught by Firestone's crew. Branding takes teamwork and the dogs cooperate.



Rancher Carl Firestone and other workers, above, tilt a calf table on its side so a calf can be branded, vaccinated and implanted with a growth hormone. The bulls will be castrated. The entire process takes less than three minutes.



Ranching life is hard work

It's a branding day at the Carl Firestone Ranch near P-Burg and more than 150 calves will be worked today. This is the first of three days of branding to be done on the Firestone ranch.

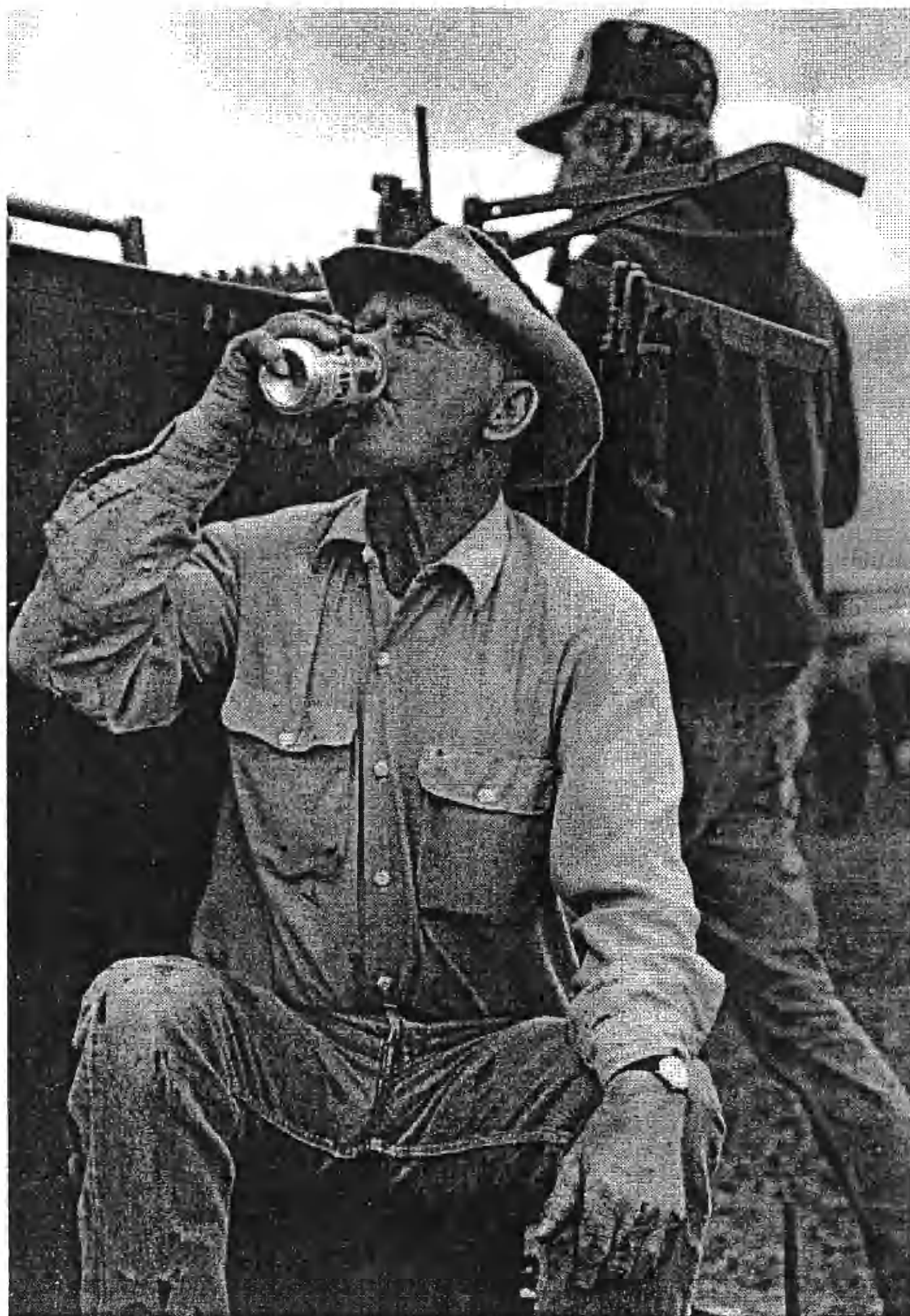
The crew is efficient and fast and calves are quickly herded into the calf chute by the blue heelers and the ranch crew.

As soon as the smoke clears from the branding process, the calves bolt out into the corral with the

blue heelers right behind them. Cows wait nearby ready to be reunited with their calves.

Other ranchers, such as Russell Smith, find additional ways to make a living.

From a ranch outside of Philipsburg, Russell Smith Jr. operates Big M Outfitters, which guides 40-50 hunters a year. Most of those hunters hail from the eastern United States, and a third of them bag a bull elk, Smith says.



After a long,
ard day Carl
restone
laxes.
morrow there
ill be another
O calves to
and.

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Sheriff officers sharpen their marksmanship skills at a practice range just outside Philipsburg.

Photo by Charlie Eli



Cragun enjoys fishing opportunities near town.

Photo by Charlie Eliassen



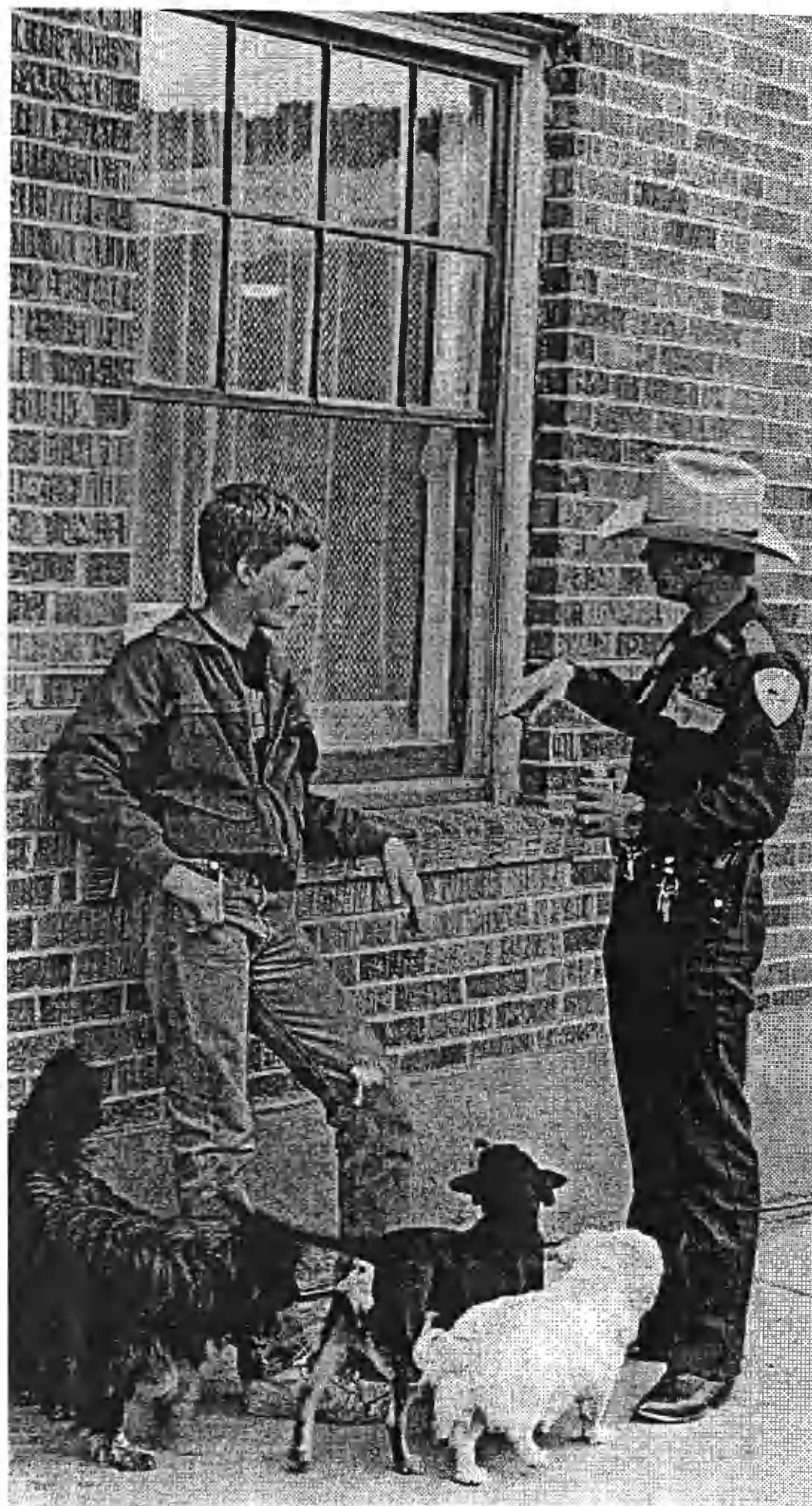
Morey and Carole Cragun

Photo by Chalie Eli



Cragun haggles with county commissioners over his budget. At right is Mike Kahoe, administrative assistant for Granite County and hospital administrator.

Photo by Patty Reksten



Sheriff Morey A. Cragun, Knudsen's boss in the vintage jail (a refinished piece of history complete with a noose hanging in a tower window), works full 12-hour patrol shifts the same as his deputies.

Cragun, three full-time deputies and one part-time officer have the task of patrolling all of Granite County, including law enforcement for Philipsburg. The town used to have its own policeman but relinquished that job in favor of county protection.

The sheriff says Philipsburg has the same lawbreaking problems as metropolitan areas such as Tacoma, Wash., from which he moved. Drugs, alcohol abuse by youth, burglaries, car theft, even an occasional homicide are all found in Philipsburg, although on a scale comparable to population.

Cragun has made youth one of the primary emphases of his department, and his crackdowns on keggers have stirred controversy. The sheriff's office also helped start the teen center. One of the obstacles Cragun encountered was a lack of adult cooperation, as in the shortage of chaperons. "For the most part, it's 'We like what you're doing, but don't bother us,'" Cragun says.

Mike Kahoe wields power from the top of both hills in Philipsburg. On the south side he wears his hospital administrator's hat; when he crosses to the other side and enters the courthouse he becomes the administrative assistant for Granite County.

A third-generation Philipsburger, Kahoe subscribes to what he calls the "Wizard of Oz theory"—if you can't find happiness in your own back yard, where will you find it?

The county and the hospital face a similar challenge: money. In a county with only 2,800 residents, revenue isn't overflowing. Kahoe says, however, that people are "sensible enough to know these are the good old days."

Cragun talks with a local teen.

Photo by Charlie Eliassen



The silver and gold processing mill, above, at Philipsburg is managed by Bill Antonioli. Despite the lack of active mining close by, mill is open sporadically. The mill sometimes processes silver and gold from other places in Montana. The current mill was built 1981 by the Contact Mill and Mining Co. and it is built on the same site as the original BiMetallic Mill which was constructed the late 1800s.

A Century of Milling

Just as Philipsburg has survived since the 1800s, so has the mill south of town.

At its inception in 1889, it was known as the BiMetallic mill. Later it became Granite BiMetallic, then Philipsburg Mining Company, and today its latest revival is as the Contact Mill and Mining Co. In the early days, its stamps and presses processed tons of ore and the end product was millions of dollars in silver and manganese.

The site is still milling in the 1980s under the ownership of the Antonioli family of Butte. A new mill was built in 1981 on the historic site that contains many remnants of the past century of operation, including distinctive twin smokestacks visible from a distance.

The mill's biggest customer, Black Pine Mining Co., closed its doors in early 1988, but mill supervisor Bill Antonioli isn't overly concerned.

The mill is idle this week, but another shipment of ore is due next week or the week after that.

"We didn't build it predicated on Black Pine," Antonioli says. "We'll be here long after Black Pine is gone." He notes that the mill still has several smaller customers, notably gold miners in the area, and Black Pine's output was an on-again, off-again phenomenon. The mill itself has been shut down periodically since it was built, a trait Antonioli ties to the nature of the business.

Mining and milling are boom and bust operations, he says. "It's like the oil business, only it doesn't boom quite as good and maybe it doesn't bust quite as hard, either."

The job loss from Black Pine's shutdown, including around 10 workers at the mill, is significant, Antonioli says. "Those aren't BS jobs. They don't pay a fortune, but \$11 an hour or so is still important."

At full bore, the Contact mill employs 17. Without Black Pine's contribution, that drops to five workers. The mill



Photos by Patty Reksten

Ed Kahoe, left, checks gravel at the Contact Mill and Mining Co. before processing. Below, Jack McCoy checks the silver content of the ore.

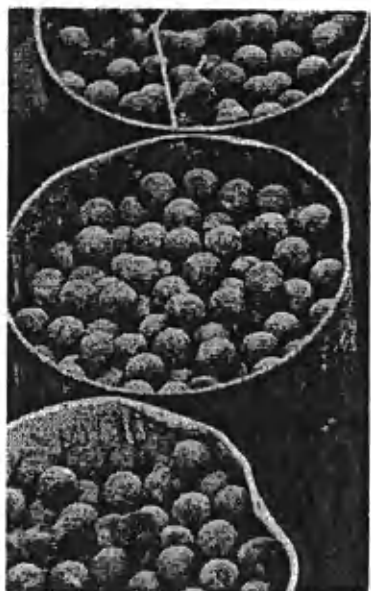


le this week, Antonioli
ys, but another shipment of
e is due next week and the
ill will run.

The mill is mainly a
n concentrator, using a
otation process and a
avity circuit, that produces
oncentrate usually sent to
smelter for further refining.

On occasion the
coming ore yields more
mplete results, Antonioli
alls. "We ran ore for the
old Coin Mine and
tracted actual gold
ggets."

A customer needs to have
least a thousand tons of ore for a mill run. With the silver
e from Black Pine, Contact was averaging 1,000 tons a
y, running 24 hours a day seven days a week. The mill
n normally handle about 300 tons in an eight-hour shift.



While he's talking about the mill at an interview in a
Philipsburg cafe, Antonioli is interrupted by a man who
says he knows a prospective mill customer. "How about a
big tonnage for a big price?" Antonioli asks with a laugh.

The Antonioli family not only acquired the mill but also
extensive mining claims, although it's doing no mining
now.

The family business is planning a new venture along ith
Granite County. The county is negotiating with Montana
Power Co. to acquire the hydroelectric dam at Georgetown
Lake, with an agreement that the Antonioli family would operate
the dam. Antonioli says a million-dollar reconstruction of
the dam is planned if the deal goes through. The dam was
built in the early 1900s primarily to provide power for the
mill.

Antonioli foresees a steady future for the mill as well
as for Philipsburg. "There's a lot of inertia here," he says of
the town. "I'd expect it would continue."

"I like it around here and I'm going to stick around as
long as I can provide for my family."

GROWING OLD

Chapter Seven

Heinie Winninghoff

A swift spring snowstorm has dumped a wet blanket of snow on Philipsburg, so E.R. "Heinie" Winninghoff fires up his tractor and sets to work plowing snow.

He clears first the driveway and walk at his Ford dealership and service station, Winninghoff Motors, and then proceeds down the street, scraping the sidewalk for a block in either direction of his business, crossing the street and performing the same service on the other side of Philipsburg's main street.

"It's the neighborly thing to do," Winninghoff says of his tractor toil, explaining that among the beneficiaries of his efforts are one man who is crippled and another in a wheelchair.

After he clambers off the tractor, Winninghoff, dressed in blue coveralls with "Heinie" stitched in script across the chest, heads into Winninghoff Motors, a business he's run since 1928. At any given time, he might be found there pumping gas, helping customers at the parts counter, or just engaged in neighborly conversation.

Most of the time, too, he does this with a wide grin on his face. "Have you ever seen anybody who smiles as much as Heinie does?" one Philipsburg resident wonders with admiration.

Winninghoff turned 81 years old in 1988, and although his sons Bob and Mike now run the business, Heinie is still very active.

"When I'm not doing anything else, I help out," Winninghoff says. "My wife's dead and I'm not going to stay home and twiddle my thumbs."

Winninghoff laughs as he gives a brief summary of his life. "I was born and raised in Philipsburg and got in the automotive business and don't know enough to get out."

But Winninghoff never really wanted out. Philipsburg has always been home and will stay that way. As an indication of how deeply planted his roots are, Winninghoff has lived in Philipsburg all but four years of his life. "I've lived all my life in two houses, and one's



Photo by Scott Cra

across the street from the other. I was born and raised in one house, and when I got married in 1931, I bought the house across the street."

He points out he's not alone among his contemporaries in lifelong devotion to the town. "Quite a few lived the whole lives here," he says, citing Jim Patten, the Huffmans, the Gillises, Charlie Carp and Tex Crowley.

Winninghoff says Philipsburg has been a comfortable town in which to live, and he's happy he stayed.

Winninghoff's family has been in Philipsburg since 1883, when his father arrived during mining boom times, liked what he saw in Philipsburg, and never left.

In those days, ore was hauled in horses and wagons (and via sleds in winter), so his father set up a blacksmith shop until the World War I era. Trucks and automobiles came on the scene then, Winninghoff recalls, "and that was an end to the horse-and-buggy days and put an end to the blacksmith business."

The blacksmith shop was converted to a service station in 1927 by Winninghoff's brothers, and the next year he joined them in establishing a Ford dealership.

Winninghoff, who eventually took over sole ownership, says business has been up and down over the intervening 60 years.

"In 1929 we sold 99 cars," Winninghoff says of the Model A days, "then it was down to two in 1932. Now we sell about 50 to 75 units a year."

When Winninghoff was growing up, vestiges of the

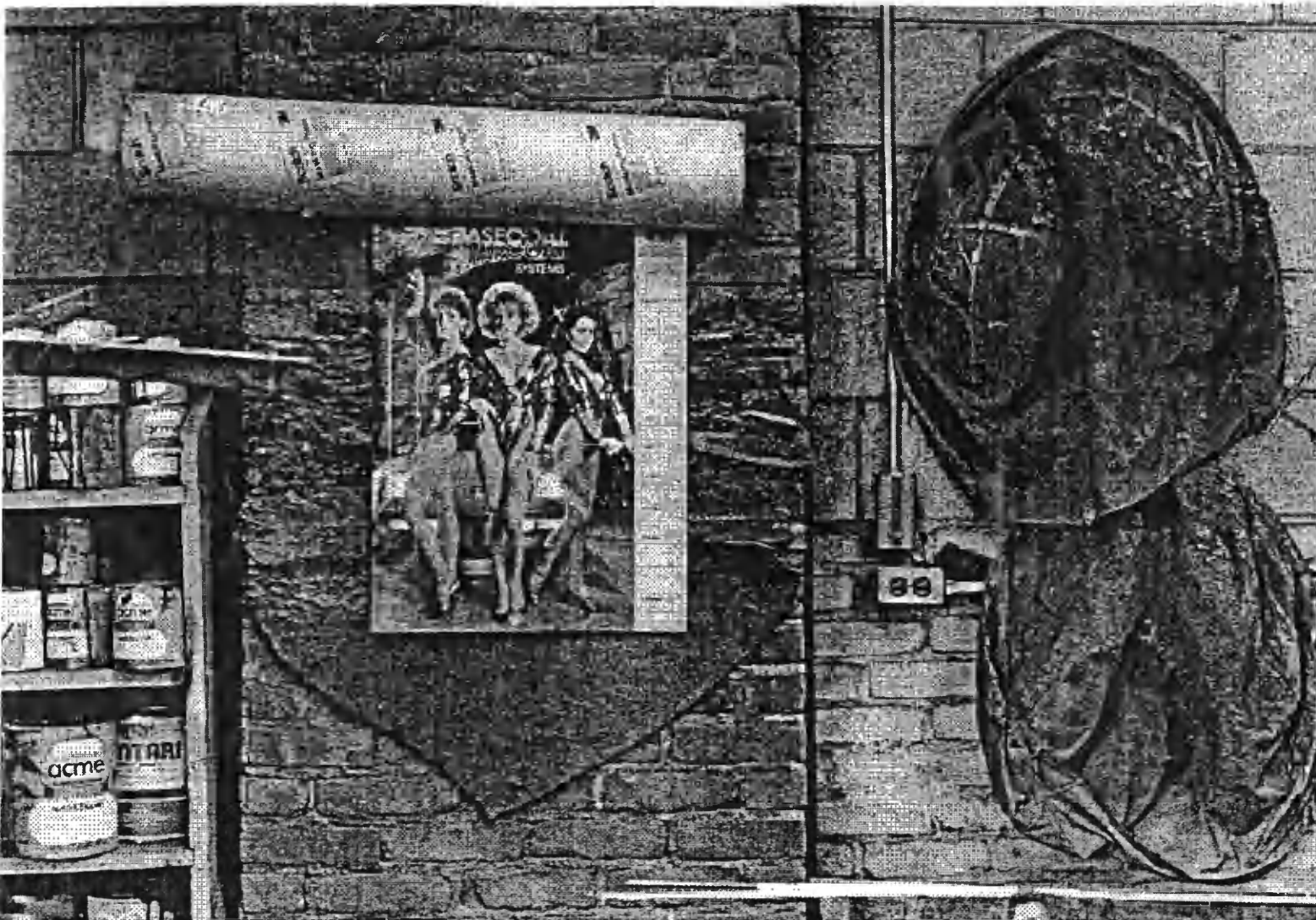
"In 1929 we sold 99 cars, then it was down to two in 1932. Now we sell about 50 to 75 units a year."

Heinie Winninghoff



You can accumulate a lot of parts in 60 years of operation. Above, Al Bell searches through the parts catalog for a gas cap that will fit a customer's recreational vehicle. He was unable to find the cap in the current inventory so he repaired the broken one in the garage. Far left, Wes Hopp, "The North Dakota Dutchman," takes time out to have a cigarette before working on the Ford truck behind him.

*Photos by
Greg Van Tighem*



Winninghoff Motors has been in operation since 1929 and the walls reflect the passing of time and the personalities of those who work at the garage. As the years go by, more and more history is added to the walls.

Photo by Greg Van Tighem

silver glory days in Philipsburg and Granite still abounded. Winninghoff notes that when silver was demonetized in the 1890s, "everybody walked out of Philipsburg and Granite. In that day and age, when the mines closed down, there was nothing for them to do. They just walked off and left everything up there."

Somewhat ruefully, Winninghoff recalls of his youth, "There were all kinds of houses left intact in Granite. We broke more windows and dishes than I could remember."

As he gazes out the window of Winninghoff Motors, he is touched by other memories, as he watches children sliding down the hill below the school. "When I was a kid, we slid down that same hill, the same old hill for 75 years now."

Winninghoff remembers the big manganese mining surge in World War I in Philipsburg. "Single miners coming in here had a hell of a time finding a place to stay," Winninghoff says, noting that the town swelled to 1,500-2,000 people. "One boarding house had to run shifts. One shift would get up and go to work and the other would come in and go to bed."

A similar boom boosted by manganese enveloped the town in World War II. "Outside of them two times, the

town remained about 1,100 people—pretty stable," Winninghoff says. "I think the overall picture of Philipsburg has been a little bit more stable than most."

He's not sure exactly where that stability comes from nor is he certain why Winninghoff Motors has survived long. The dealership is the second oldest in Montana.

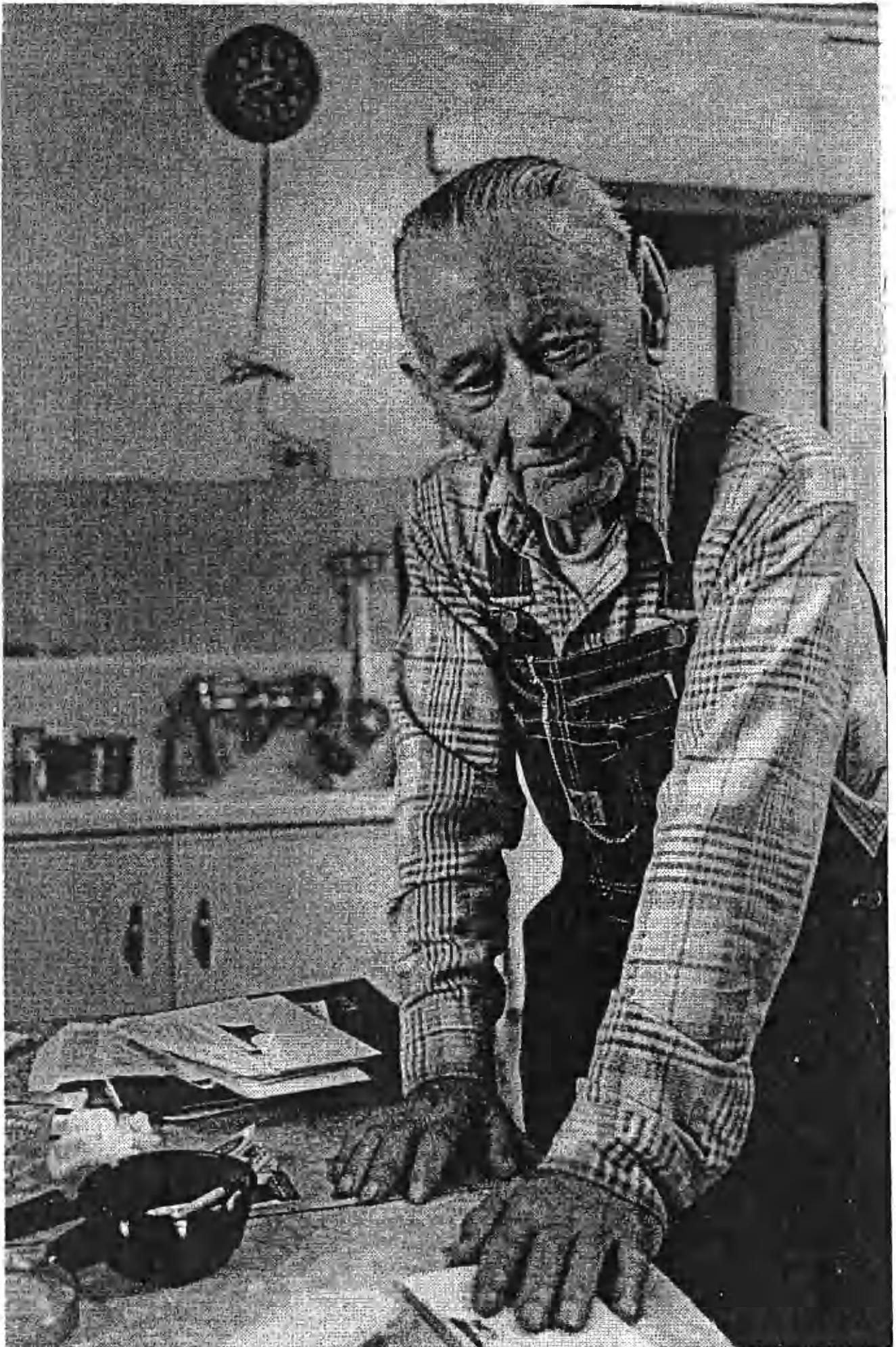
Some of the business's success may derive from Winninghoff's ever-smiling optimism and his satisfaction in making Philipsburg his home.

That optimism can be contagious. As high school teacher Sandy Wattula puts it, "Heinie Winninghoff epitomizes everything good about this town." She says Philipsburg oldtimers, particularly Heinie, "have enriched my life beyond belief. They've given me insight that Philipsburg will be here forever."

Winninghoff's legacy may be, too. His sons are following him not only in business, but also in Philipsburg residence: both Mike and Bob have been lifetime Philipsburgers except for years spent in the service or at college.

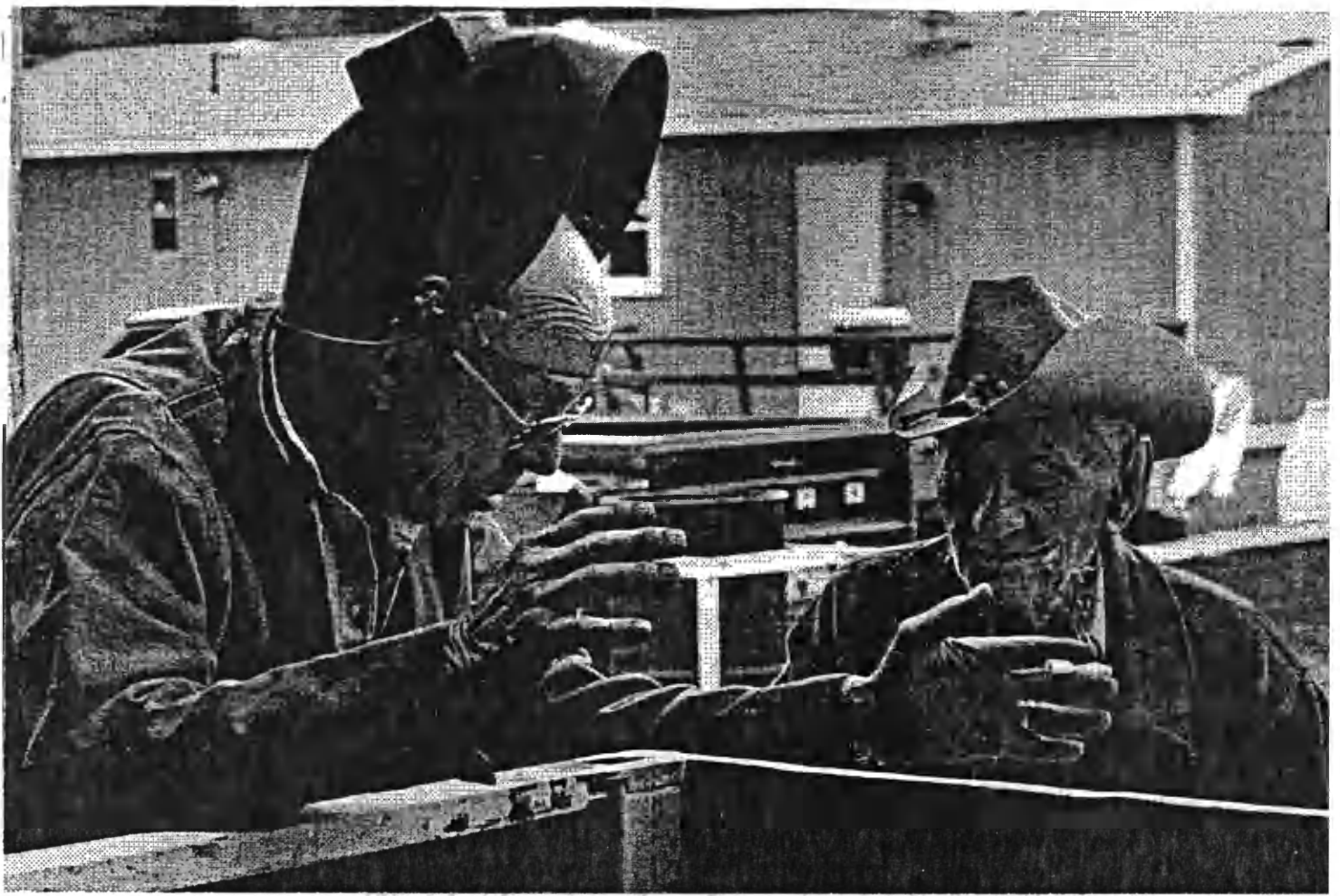
What Heinie Winninghoff has built, both on business and family levels, could well continue as an integral part of Philipsburg's future.

**Henry
Hull:
A Miner
to the
End**



Henry Hull, was always hoping he 'd find that big strike. He died April 13, 1989. His story follows.

Photo by Roger Maier



Henry talks to friend Charles "Bill" Byam about putting handles on a new rocker box that he was building.

Photo by Roger I

Henry Hull: A Miner to the End

When he was only 12 years old, Henry Hull was playing music for dances in the Philipsburg Band. Not long after that, he got his first taste of mining work alongside his father.

Both those beginnings were a long time ago, but today Hull, age 90, still keeps in musical tune and still pursues a miner's dreams.

In the old wooden house on Sutter Street that's been his home for almost 30 years, Hull is quick to entertain guests with music or invite them to go into a mining venture with him.

The wall of his music room is adorned with a Bavarian guitar, balalaika and four-string guitar, each of which he can play. Stacked unassumingly in one corner are boxes containing violins. One is an Amati from the 1800s; another bears the inscription, "Stradivarius 1762."

These "fiddles" are his favorites. Cradling the Amati comfortably under his chin, he sits at the center of the room and performs pieces ranging from polkas to country-western. Deftly maneuvering the bow and working the fingerboard, his strong, sure fingers look out of place at the end of his thin, bony arms. Hull is frail and bowed, with a white T-shirt hanging limply on his frame, but his hands move steadily on the violin, and all the while his brightly shining eyes give testament to his love of song.

Hull says music always came naturally to him, which

led to proficiency on a variety of instruments—all of which he plays by ear. "I don't know one note from another. I know chords and a few things, but those things they put on paper don't mean nothing." He says he just listens to a song and figures it out from there. "If I take a liking to a tune, I can play it inside a few minutes."

Just as music was a natural talent for Hull, so was mining. His father was one of the first white men to live in Rock Creek west of Philipsburg. Hull was born there in 1898 and "from the time I was a little kid I was raised up mining," with his first jobs helping his father.

They were far from his last, and Hull proudly points to the 70 years he spent in mines all over the world. He pursued silver, gold and sapphires in Montana, copper in South America and Butte, opals in Australia. "I mined over the world, every place but Africa, and I don't want to go there because of those damned cannibals," Hull says.

"I've mined for everything imaginable," he says. "You name it and I mined for it."

Mining in Butte gave him silicosis, a chronic lung disease, from which he has suffered since 1957. "They sent me down from Butte to die with silicosis, and I almost did," he says. "Now I suffer all the time. You get tired suffering." In every room of his house, Hull has milk cartons which he uses for spittoons when he draws up mucus from his lungs.

He holds no grudges against mining or the Anaconda company, for which he was working when he contracted



Henry Hull with friend "Cowboy" Joe Johnson at the Thirsty Dog Saloon.

Photo by Roger Maier

the disease. He is, instead, proud to have worked for the company for 22 years and proud to have been able to mine. He even worked for the company in South America during World War II "teaching those Indians down there how to mine copper."

Hull, who says he was always interested in rocks, was trained in mineralogy and geology by Joe Pardee, who took him all through the mines around Philipsburg. Later he went to the school of mines in Golden, Colo., "for about three months. I passed everything they had and even had to tell them some things they didn't know."

During his long mining career, Hull claims, "I owned lots of mines of my own and opened up lots of mines for other miners." He still professes to have mineral holdings in several places in the United States.

Along his travels, Hull says he married five times and had several other female "partners." He also fondly recalls the days of the red-light district in Philipsburg.

"It run down here where the White Front Bar is today, back of the Opera House—all red lights clean over this way about two blocks," Hull remembers. The brothels, he notes, were "a necessary evil. Them girls that worked in those days were honest girls, not crooks like these girls today."

"In them days it was legal and they had to be examined, not like today with those girls on the streets and that goddamned AIDS going around."

Hull says he was quite a connoisseur of brothel services.

"I chased around whorehouses all the time in my life. When I didn't have a woman, I went to a whorehouse."

Although he now lives alone, Hull says he's still looking for another female partner.

The longtime miner curtailed some of his travels and moved back to Philipsburg in 1960. "This was my home town and I knew there was mines here," he says.

"Something drew me back here, I don't know what."

At his house, he has all his "gatherings" of musical instruments, mining inventions, and, to a certain degree, hopes.

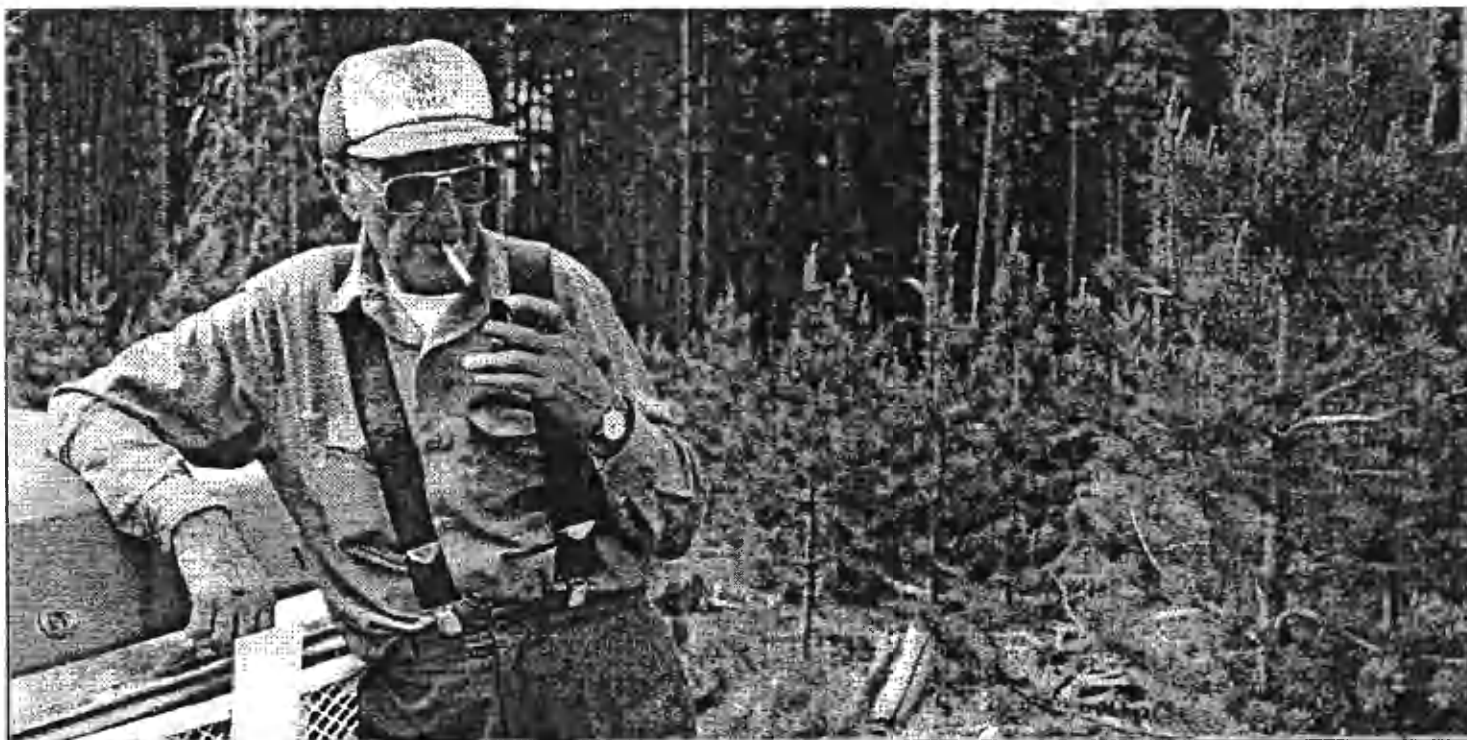
He's never stopped prospecting "All these bars are my offices. That's where you find the mining men and the miners. I do lots of mining business in the bars."

Hull adds, "Right now I'm going to try to start two more gold mines if I can make it that long." He says he's trying to enlist help but can't find anybody. He's asking his nephew to get involved, and even asks one visitor, "Would you like to get out and make \$50 a day mining?"

Hull is always hoping and trying to find one more strike and one more chance to mine.

"I'm never happier than when I'm out someplace digging up gold or something."

This interview with Henry was conducted in the spring of 1988.



Howard Bish leans on his pickup truck just outside of Philipsburg.

Photo by Jim Davis

LIFE GOES ON

Two years have passed since the first photographs were taken of Philipsburg residents. The town has stayed much the same, but some of the people changed..

Mel and Sandy Wattula have moved. Mel worked out of town for nearly a year while Sandy continued to teach at the high school but now they've sold their house and left. The Bolstads, too, have left again. After the mine closed down Larry worked in Lewistown, 280 miles away and returned to his family on the weekends. They reportedly live in Cooke City, Mont.

Adele Knudson, the "wondermother" who worked many jobs to support her family, closed her craft shop, quit her job as a dispatcher for the sheriff's department and left for Billings. Other families have arrived.

Nancy Owens was mayor until September of 1989. She decided not to run again. At last report, her immediate successor was not known. No one had filed for the position.

Winninghoff's is still "the second oldest Ford Dealership in Montana" and Heinie still takes an active interest in the business.



Jim and Phyllis Patton moved out of their home into a nursing home after living in the same house for 100 years. Jim Patton has since died.

Morey Cragun and his wife, Carole, have a son of their own now. Mrs. Wilma Bruns is still collecting historical photographs of Philipsburg and yet another Philipsburg history buff, Dolly Page, is still extolling the town's virtues.


Dolly admits there are drawbacks to Philipsburg's small-town existence primarily the inability of the community to keep its young people. She is buoyed, however, by residents who left town to seek careers elsewhere who are now returning.

"They may have left home, but they took it right with them and they always come back," she says.

A trend toward a retirement community is something Dolly sees as a future option for Philipsburg. Of those who retire there, she says, "They like the fishing, they like the hunting, they like the freedom, and they know they don't have to keep up with the Joneses. Nobody cares—we have very few Joneses."

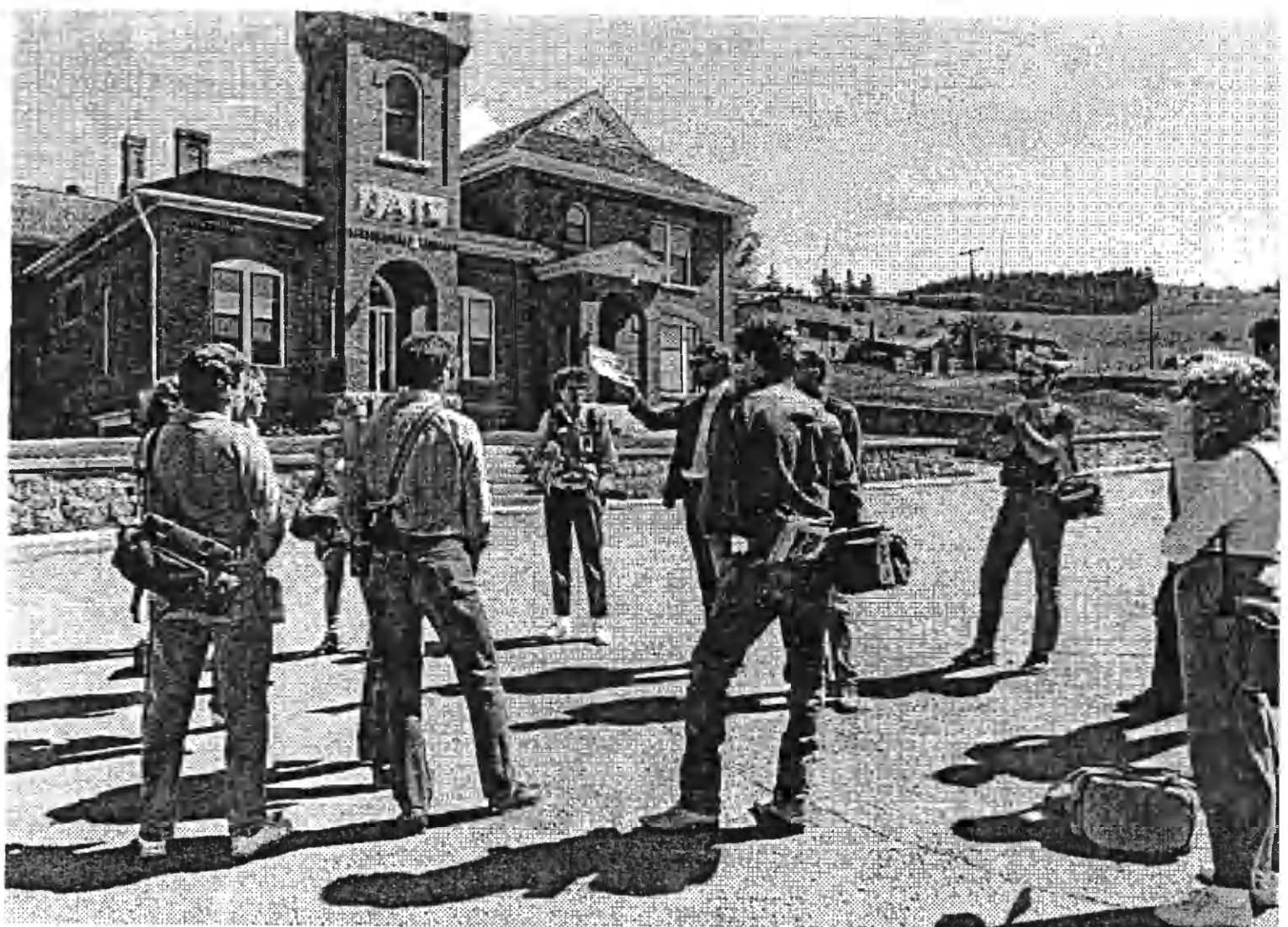
Dolly is characteristically upbeat about the future, regardless of the vagaries of mining or other industries.

"I think Philipsburg will be here for a long, long time because there's always going to be someone who loves this place."



The hand bell sits on a ledge outside of the Philipsburg elementary school until it is time to bring the children in from recess. Then it is rung. The bell is a fitting addition to the old school building, reportedly the oldest still being used in Montana today. The school was built in 1896.

Photo by Todd Goodrich



Students arrive in Philipsburg in May 1987 and are given a tour of the town by Mike Kahoe, a native resident, who wouldn't live anywhere else. Behind them is the historic jail that still has a noose hanging in the tower window.

Photo by Patty Rek

THE PROJECT

In May 1987 thirteen students and two photojournalism teachers spent six days and nights in a small Montana mining town. The journalists were there to record the lives of the people of Philipsburg. They were trying to capture the visual essence of the town, but more specifically to document the days and nights, the stories of the residents.

Six days in the lives of the people of a small town is not meant to be a complete record, merely a sampling of what the residents are like in the late twentieth century.

As Scott Crandell, the text author of this book said in an article for a magazine about the project:

"They explored everywhere, from the halls of the high school to the dark, subterranean tunnels of the Black Pine silver mine; from the downtown bars to the churches on the hill above; from the day-care center to the nursing home next door; and even into homes for a look at family life."

The purposes of the project were many: to create an archival portrait of a small town, to give students practical experience in producing in-depth photo stories in real life situations and to foster a greater degree of understanding by students and residents.

During their stay students lived in makeshift quarters churches. The women stayed in the Presbyterian Church and the men used the Catholic Church community room. Film was processed the same day it was shot in the high school photography lab. Each night extensive critique sessions were conducted and students ventured out into the town and its surroundings to complete their stories.

The result: 10,000 frames of black-and-white film, a book and an exhibit that opened at the University of Montana in the fall of 1988 and was last on display in Philipsburg during July and August of 1989.

Then senior Todd Goodrich (now a photographer for Havre Daily News) said of the project: "The biggest thing got out of it was dealing with people that closely. You live with them; you're in their homes. It helped me get close to my subjects than I've ever been before."

In preparation for the on-site visit to Philipsburg, the photo class studied the sociology of small towns and the history and techniques of documentary photography. The class also consulted with Angus McDougall, professor emeritus from the University of Missouri, who pioneered documentary coverage of small towns by journalism students.

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